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ABSTRACT

This personal/social skills training series consisting of five modules is designed to complement basic academic skills and employment skills training. The objective of the training is to address the affective competencies that adults need to attain and succeed in vocational training and employment. An introduction provides materials for the facilitator, including a list of resource materials, a bibliography, and audiovisual materials. Each module begins with a training outline for structuring each training session. The outline provides for instruction, modeling, self-assessment activities, experiential activities, and feedback and reinforcement. A script serves as a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal. An outline is also presented to provide instructions for using the materials in the module. Activity sheets for each activity list goals, describe group application, and set forth the procedure. Module topics are self-awareness, assertiveness skills, problem solving and decision making, stress management skills, and communication skills. (YLB)

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*A New Dimension In Learning*

ED298329

# Adult Literacy Project

## Social/Personal Skills Modules

Written By:
**Ora Howard**

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Grayson County College
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# INTRODUCTION

Surveys and studies of Adult Basic Education Programs in the United States reveal that poor attendance and high drop-out rates present serious obstacles to program objectives and success, particularly for the low income population. Two possible contributing factors to this problem are the hopelessness of the hard-core disadvantaged who do not view the attainment of basic skills as helpful and the program's lack of relevance in the participant's out-of-school problems.

Studies of ABE programs with the highest success rates suggest that teaching styles, teacher preparation and attitudes, and student involvement in planning their own learning needs and developing their own materials are factors that contribute to student retention.

The findings of research studies of motivation and academic achievement suggest that the individual's perception of self-control strongly affects his level of motivation. People who feel in control of their own destiny take more risk and pursue goals that involve competition; whereas, people who feel that their lives are controlled by events outside themselves take fewer risks, are less likely to persist in competitive academic situations and are less flexible in changing self-defeating behaviors and attitutdes.

The failure to acquire internal locus of control (the perception that power to control one's life is within) appears to be related to environmental conditions that prevent the development of self-mastery or inhibit the psychological mechanism that promote feelings of internal control.

Traditional school environments have failed to meet the needs of many adults who need basic academic skills training, and more often than not, adult training programs are held in a traditional school setting that employ traditional training methods and materials. Research addressing adult literacy programs clearly indicates the need to broaden basic education preparation and develop innovative programs that will address the out-of-school issues that impede student progress and success. An integrated approach to adult literacy training that incorporates affective and academic competencies, career and vocational awareness and employment skills training provides students the opportunity to develop skills that empower them to act in their own behalf in seeking solutions to problems.

Psychologists have recognized that the acquisition of cognitive and affective competencies is a vital component of adaptation, especially in a society that stresses achievement. Social development cannot be separated from cognitive and intellectual development and from the growth of competencies and skills. Adequate functioning in our society and the individual's perception of his own worth depend on his ability to cope with problems. The person's concept of himself and the manner in which he assesses his own accomplishments and failures are critical aspects of personal/social development.

The personal/social skills training series is designed to complement basic academic skills and employment skills training. The objective of the training is to address the often neglected affective competencies that adults need in order to access and succeed in vocational training and employment. The following is a summary of basic attitudes and abilities or affective competencies that enhance an individual's success in vocational and employment pursuits:

Self-enhancing vs. self-destructive attitudes.
Generalized interpersonal trust that one can rely other people for support and acceptance.
The ability to empathize and see the perspective of others.
A meaningful purpose and direction in life.

An awareness of meaningful cooperative interdependence with other people.

A strong and integrated sense of personal identity.

The personal/social skills training is designed to teach skills that enhance self-awareness with the idea that people can change when they discover or "see" self-defeating and counterproductive practices that they engage; and to teach skills in self-management that offer an alternative to self-defeating or nonproductive practices. The training content suggests a proactive approach to learning life/work skills, and it promotes the philosophy that life is a do-it-yourself affair that must be understood backwards but lived forward.

The training modules employ a combination of procedures for teaching personal/social skills, including modeling, role playing, group interaction and group discussions. This format is used to increase social competencies such as participation, cooperation, communication, and interpersonal interaction. Group participation and discussions facilitate acceptance, sharing, trusting, helping, cooperation and communication, and it provides a powerful source of motivation and support. Experiential learning (role-playing and rehearsal) facilitates personal involvement and commitment to learning and provides a mechanism

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for integrating and generalizing new information and skills.

The single most important factor in successful training outcomes is the effectiveness of the training facilitator, and the key to effective intervention is the trainer/learner relationship. The effective trainer/facilitator is the agent of change that responds in specified ways to achieve the desired results when introducing to the learner new behaviors, attitudes, and strategies that promote success in getting one's needs met.

The personal/social skills training is focused towards interaction as a vehicle for learning affective competencies with the facilitator as the model. Successful training outcomes depend upon the effectiveness of the facilitator more than the materials, procedures, and techniques employed.

An effective facilitator possesses an understanding and awareness of himself and knowledge of the helping process. The following is a summary of effective facilitator characteristics:

> He sees people as more important than things, and his priorities involve human relationships. He has the ability to reflect on historical events of his life when it helps to clarify "here and now" situations, but his primary means of dealing with problems is to focus on the

"now."

> He views other people as able rather than unable to meet the demands of their lives and his task as a helper is to encourage, support, and appropriately self-disclose versus dominate, control, and "fix" other people.
>
> The effective facilitator is empathic, warm, genuine, and respects the rights, worth, and potential of other people. He can self-disclose without exploiting or interfering with persons who seek his help. He is not hostile or critical, and he has the talent, dedication, and compassion to work cooperatively with others.

The personal/social skills modules are designed not so much as a facilitator "cookbook" but as a framework for creating a learning laboratory that is nonthreatening, participant intensive, and pragmatic. The facilitator's role is to orchestrate a climate that is conducive to helping people make the positive changes that promote personal growth and success.

The facilitator might find it helpful to experiment with the various activities before initiating a training session in order to "debug" and tailor the presentations to fit the needs and characteristics of the target group.

The following resource materials are recommended for the inexperienced facilitator:

The Art of Helping, Robert R. Carkhuff, Human Resource Development Press, Inc., 22 Amherst Road, Amherst, Mass.

The Art of Helping: Student Workbook, Robert R. Carkhuff, Human Resource Development Press, Inc., 22 Amherst Road, Amherst, Mass.

Reaching Out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization, David W. Johnson, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Human Relations Development: A Manual for Educators, George M. Gazda, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, Mass.

The Helping Relationship: Process and Skills, Lawrence M. Brammer, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

In summary, it is important to remember that the crucial factor in successful training outcomes is the facilitator/learner relationship. Learners are more open and honest about their needs and problems, more receptive to explore alternatives, more likely to act upon advice offered by a facilitator, and more likely to initiate behavior and attitude changes when a positive, accepting relationship is established with a facilitator. Training procedures, presentations, and activities that are congruent with the needs and desires of the target group will enhance participation, cooperation, and learning. The facilitator's initial task is to become familiar with the participants and their particular needs and expectations of training. The identified participant needs expectations and skill deficits dictate the content and structure of the training sessions. The social/personal skills training focuses on common affective deficits that create barriers to personal social and career success. The topics and activities of each module are designed to teach skills that enhance personal effectiveness and competence with the expectation that participants will develop an attitude of self-responsibility.

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# Module I.
## Training Outline
## Suggested Script
## Self Awareness

The following is a suggested outline for structuring each training session; however, the facilitator is encouraged to be creative, flexible and open to suggestions from the participants.

## TRAINING OUTLINE

I. INSTRUCTION

- a. Introduce topic.
- b. Elicit comments, questions, and discussion.

II. MODELING

- a. Facilitator and volunteer demonstrate appropriate behavior/skills.
- b. Show film or video that demonstrates appropriate behavior/skills.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(S)

- a. Use self-assessment as a group activity.

  (Only when participants are ready and comfortable sharing personal information.)

- b. Homework activity.

## IV. EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY(S)

a. Group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, help, trusting, and support.

b. Role playing and rehearsal of behaviors and skills.

c. Homework activities.

## V. FEEDBACK AND REINFORCEMENT

a. Facilitate group discussion.

b. Review.

c. Positive feedback from facilitator.

The following script is a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal:

We are not born with the skills that are necessary for us to get along with other people and to manage the survival demands of our environment. How we choose to develop and manage relationships, and how we handle environmental demands is the result of our experiences and our role models (parents, teachers, peers). Experience involves the interacting with or manipulating an object, person, place, or information of any kind.

When we encounter new and unfamiliar situations we use our past experiences to organize, order, and make sense of what is happening now. We use this process no matter what the skill to be learned. We may feel awkward and unsure of ourselves in our first attempts at performing a new skill, but as we practice we gradually forget about how we are performing, and the skill becomes natural and automatic.

Accepting and appreciating yourself are related to being aware of your strengths and assets. We all have many strengths-- strengths that we are not using fully. We can develop new strengths (any skill, ability, talent, or

personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your self-acceptance as you become more aware of your strengths and develop new ones. The more you see yourself as having real skills, abilities, talents, and other personal strengths, the more you will value and accept yourself.

The information that we explore and discuss and the activities that we perform throughout the training are to help you improve skills as well as learn new skills that will enable you to better manage relationships and environmental demands. Learning new skills will involve the followng steps:

1. We will discuss the importance of learning certain skills and how they will be of value to you.

2. We will examine what the skill is and how it is performed.

3. We will find ways to practice the skill.

4. We will practice the skill in groups, or you may choose to set up practice situations with people outside the group so that you can receive help and feedback about your performance.

# MODULE 1 SELF-AWARENESS

Instructions:

1. Facilitator discusses topics listed below with the group.
   - a. What Kind of Person are You?
   - b. Our Many Faces
   - c. Optional information

2. Follow Activities in a sequential order.

Activities:

1a. Self-Portrait -- Helps members to become better acquainted.

2a. Self-Exploration -- Increases level of awarenesss of self-concept.

3a. Characterizing Ideal Self -- Clarifies values and ideals.

4a. Identifying Your Social Self -- Identifies aspects of self.

5a. Body Image -- Increases awareness of body.

6a. Affective Description -- Helps describe self by using affective terms.

7a. Zoo -- Helps gain insight into personal traits or characteristics.

8a. Optional Activities

## TOPICS

What Kind or Person Are You?

Our Many Faces

## WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE YOU?

What kind of person are you? How would you describe yourself to someone who does not know you well? Do you like yourself or do you feel a basic sense of shame, disappointment, and contempt when you think about yourself? Do you feel confident and accepted or do you feel inadequate and isolated? Do you feel that what happens in your life is a result of your actions and efforts or the result of forces outside yourself? These are important questions to ask because how we feel about ourselves influence everything that we do. Our feeling about ourselves is reflected in how we view our environment, other people, and our own circumstances. People who feel positive about themselves experience a greater degree of contentment and satisfaction with their lives, whereas, people who feel negative about themselves experience a greater degree of frustration and lack of fulfillment with their lives.

Our feelings of stability and well-being depend upon a strong and integrated personal identity; an identity that reflects a reliable set of attitudes that defines who we are. This self-definition consists of our view of our physical characteristics or body image (height, weight, sex, hair), social roles (sex, ethnicity, age, occupation), our activities (sports, dances, organizations), attitudes and interests (music, nature, political issues), and basic personality traits (out-going, generous, aggressive). Our core identity and personal uniqueness tends to remain the same even when all the world around us is changing. While our uniqueness remains intact, our attitudes, behaviors, social roles, and values can change as we learn new information, engage in new experiences and activities, and when we form new relationships.

Our identity evolves through a process of observing and interacting with others; making comparisons and receiving feedback from others, and finally, choosing and adopting a variety of social roles. This is an ongoing process that we follow throughout our life cycle. Significant life events such as leaving home, marriage, birth of a child, job changes, and retirement forces us to make adjustments and changes in our lives. Unpleasant and unplanned events or a personal crisis such as a death, divorce, a debilitating accident, illness or the sudden loss of a job requires change and adjustment. Coping with these events can be a time for assessing ourselves, our priorities, and our life goals. There are many accounts of individuals who made major changes and achieved a level of success that they never believed possible prior to experiencing a major life crisis.

Our motivation for pursuing new interests, seeking more knowledge, learning new skills, developing new relationships, and changing our attitudes and behaviors is often related to a significant life event, an internal discomfort or dissatisfaction in some area of our life or external pressures. When we are confronted with or experience a problem, need, want, or lack, we take measures to reduce the discomfort associated with the problem. The availability of resources and information, our feeling of well-being, as well as our level of self-awareness, will affect the outcome of our efforts to make personal or situational changes.

What we know and how we feel about ourselves will have the greatest impact on our motivation and determination to change ourselves or some aspect of our lives.

The self-awareness training session is designed to help you learn about yourself and the way you relate to others. The information and activities will help you to: (1) better understand your behavior, feelings, attitudes and motives, (2) develop a greater awareness of how you resemble or differ from others, and (3) develop a clearer picture of your strengths and weaknesses.

# OUR MANY FACES

Each of us has within us a collection of mental pictures that reflects how we see ourselves. This collection of mental images is called the self-concept. The self-concept is defined as the totality of beliefs, perceptions and feelings people have about themselves. It describes what a person is now, has been in the past, and the person's understanding of who he or she is becoming. The self-concept is the sum of our perceptions, understanding, and beliefs about ourselves. We see ourselves differently in the various roles that we play. We may have positive feelings about our parental or family role and feel negatively about our role as an employee. The self-concept is the screen through which everything else is seen, heard, evaluated and understood.

The self-concept has four common distinctions that include: the self I see myself to be (subjective self); the awareness of my body (body image); the self I'd like to be (ideal self); the way I feel others see me (social self). The other characteristics of the self-concept are self-esteem and self-identity.

The subjective self is the most private and personal self-image. It is the internalized impressions that result from the way we are seen and treated by significant others, especially parents. We are influenced by the judgements, expectations, beliefs, values, and opinions of parents, teachers, friends and others with whom we come in contact.

Body image is the part of the self-concept based on the individual's perception of his or her own body. It includes what we see reflected in the mirror and the way we experience our bodies.

The ideal-self represents the self that we would like to be, including our ambitions, moral ideals, and values and serves as the motivator for us to do our best. The ideal-self image moves us toward activities, experiences and people that show promise of helping us to become the person we want to be. It is the desired and fantasized self we want to be.

The social self is the ever changing, flexible side of the self that is influenced by friends, co-workers, members of social groups that the individual chooses to belong. It is the public "putting the best foot forward self."

Self-esteem is our sense of personal worth and the extent to which we value or devalue ourselves. The amount of parental acceptance and attention given to a child is an important factor in the development of his or her self-esteem. High-esteem individuals tend to come from homes where parents are democratic and accepting in child rearing, whereas, low-esteem individuals tend to come from homes where parents are critical, rejecting, and coercive in child rearing. For better or worse, these parents serve as models for their children, and when the children grow up, the parental model is still there, left as an imprint on the mind. Adults incorporate their parents' postures, stances, gestures, and many forms of body language. As adults they also put things into words as their parents did and use these "parental" words with others.

Individuals not only utilize the example of their parents' behavior, but often recall parental messages in their heads like tape recorded messages from the past. For example, a grown woman who is about to leave food on her plate sees the mental image of her father frowning and telling her disapprovingly to clean up her plate or she can't leave the table.

Every individual has a mental parent figure which forms a part of that person's behavior. When that figure is incomplete, inadequate, or confusing, an individual can take the time to re-learn and re-program the parent message inside his head.

Becoming aware of the parent inside with all its strengths and weaknesses allows a person more choice and control over his or her own behavior.

In summary, self-identity is our sense of personal uniqueness as well as the degree of consistency and agreement between our past and present, and our private and public selves. Self-identity is reflected in the decisions and choices we make about work, relationships, and lifestyles. It is the connectedness of our past, present and what we expect to become.

# ACTIVITIES

## 1a. ACTIVITY---SELF-PORTRAIT

GOALS:

a. To provide a non-threatening means of getting acquainted.

b. To facilitate self-exploration.

c. To provide an opportunity to rehearse oral communication skills.

GROUP APPLICATION: To be used to help group members become better acquainted.

PROCEDURE:

a. Ask each member of the group to introduce themselves and describe themselves by a role they fill, a physical feature or characteristic, and a personality characteristic.

Examples of role descriptors are: occupations, relationships, (parent, sister, friend, child), responsibilities/activities (homemaker, provider, shopper, tenant), leisure/recreational/social activities (golfer, reader, sports fan).

Examples of physical feature descriptors are: height, color of hair or eyes, facial shape.

Example of personality descriptors: friendly, shy, serious, out-going, reserved, mature.

b. Ask each member of the group to share an additional descriptor from one of the categories at each meeting.

## 2a. ACTIVITY---SELF-EXPLORATION

GOALS:

a. To enhance awareness of the impact of parental attitudes on the development of the self-concept.

b. To increase the participant's level of awareness of his/her self-concept.

PROCEDURE:

a. Ask group members to recall messages that they received from their parents. Examples of areas that might be explored are:
    1. What feelings, emotions, situations, people, places, things, activities, or animals did your parents encourage you to avoid? What did they encourage you to explore in these areas?
    2. What kind of praise, approval, or compliments did you receive from your parents?
    3. In what situations were your parents most critical of you? Most complimentary of you?
    4. Did your parents pay more attention to your physical appearance, your physical abilities, your social abilities, or your intellectual and creative abilities?
    5. What impressions did you form of yourself as a result of

the messages you received from your parents?

b. Encourage group members to share memories with the group if they feel comfortable in doing so.

c. Encourage individual members to share memories with someone that they trust and with whom they feel comfortable.

d. Ask group members to explore aspects/impressions of themselves that deviate from their parents' impressions.

## 3a. ACTIVITY --- CHARACTERIZING YOUR IDEAL-SELF

GOAL:

a. To clarify values and ideals.

PROCEDURE:

a. Ask participants to identify teachers, heroes, mentors and others who have influenced them, write or talk about the traits, characteristics and values of these individuals and identify ways that participants have modeled the people who influenced them.

b. Ask participants to describe their ideal self.

## 4a. ACTIVITY---IDENTIFYING YOUR SOCIAL SELVES

GOAL:

a. Identify aspects of self.

PROCEDURE:

a. Ask participants to think of five or six people that they associate with regularly. Then have them to identify which aspects of themselves they express with each friend.

b. Ask participant to write or talk about the activites, interests, feelings, and attitudes shared with each friend.

c. Have participants discuss the following questions: (1) Do you find that you feel and behave a bit differently with different people? (2) How free do you feel with the people you selected? (3) Do you feel that you have to live up to their expectations?

## 5a. ACTIVITY---BODY IMAGE

GOAL:

a. Increase awareness of body.

PROCEDURE:

a. Instruct participants to select a place where there is privacy and stand in front of a full length mirror to observe themselves for a few minutes. Ask the following questions: (1) What do you notice most? (2) Is your body relaxed or tense? (3) What about your face? (4) Are you smiling or frowning? (5) Do you notice anything of which you are not ordinarily aware?

They may also be instructed to speak into a tape recorder and ask the following questions after listening to the recording: (1) Do you like what you hear? (2) Does listening to yourself make you more aware of how you sound?

b. Instruct students to examine photographs of themselves and ask the same questions.

c. Photographs and voice recordings can be used for a group exercise for participants to receive feedback. Ask the following questions: (1) What can you tell about a person's mood by listening to his/her voice recording or by looking at a photograph? (2) What might this person be feeling or thinking?

## 6a. ACTIVITY---AFFECTIVE DESCRIPTION

GOALS:

a. To be able to describe self using affective terms.

b. To enhance self-awareness through feedback from others.

PROCEDURE:

a. Have participants choose six affective terms that best describe themselves.

b. Have participants describe each member of the group using the vocabulary of affective adjectives.

# VOCABULARY OF AFFECTIVE ADJECTIVES

ACCEPTING
ADAPTABLE
AFFECTIONATE
AGREEABLE
AGGRESSIVE
AMBITIOUS
ANXIOUS
ARROGANT
AWARE
AWKWARD
BASHFUL
BIG-HEARTED
BITTER
BLOUNT
BOLD
BRAVE
CALM
CAPABLE
CARING
CONFIDENT
COMICAL
CONSCIENTIOUS
COOPERATIVE
CONTENTED
COURTEOUS
COWARDLY
CRITICAL
CRUEL
DEDICATED
DEMANDING
DEPENDABLE
DEPENDENT
DEPRESSED
DETERMINED
DISAGREEABLE
DISCIPLINED
DOCILE
EASY-GOING
EFFICIENT
EMPATHETIC
ENERGETIC
ENTHUSIASTIC
ENVIOUS
EVIL
FAITHFUL
FEARFUL
GLOOMY
GOOD-HUMORED
GOOD-NATURED
GREEDY
HAPPY
HARSH
HATEFUL
HELPFUL
HELPLESS
HOSTILE
IMMATURE
IMPATIENT
INCONSIDERATE
INDEPENDENT
INSECURE
INSENSITIVE
IRRESPONSIBLE
IRRITABLE
JEALOUS
JITTERY

KIND
LAZY
LOGICAL
LONELY
LOVABLE
MANIPULATIVE
MATURE
MOODY
NAIVE
NEAT
NEGATIVE
NERVOUS

OBSERVANT
OBSESSIVE
OBSTINATE
OPEN
OPTIMISTIC
ORGANIZED
PASSIVE
PATIENT
PEACEFUL
PESSIMISTIC
PLEASANT

PROUD
PUNITIVE
PUSHY
QUARRELSOME
QUIET
REALISTIC
REASONABLE
REBELLIOUS
RELIABLE
REJECTING
RESPECTFUL
RESPONSIBLE

RESTLESS
REVENGEFUL
RIGID
RUDE
SAD
SARCASTIC
SECURE
SELFISH
SENSITIVE
SENTIMENTAL
SERIOUS

SNEAKY
SOCIABLE
SPONTANEOUS
STABLE
STERN
STRONG
STUBBORN
SUSPICIOUS
SYMPATHETIC
TACTFUL
TEMPERMENTAL
TENACIOUS

TENDER
TENSE
THOUGHTFUL
TOLERANT
TOUGH
TRUSTING
TRUSTWORTHY
UNAWARE
UNCERTAIN
UNEASY
UNCONCERNED

POLITE
VAIN
VICIOUS
VINDICTIVE
VIOLENT

SHY
VULNERABLE
WARM
WISE
WITHDRAWN

UNDERSTANDING
WITTY
WORRIED
YOUTHFUL
ZESTFUL

## 7a. ACTIVITY---ZOO

GOALS:

a. To gain insight into personal traits or characteristics.

b. To provide opportunity to rehearse oral communications skills.

GROUP APPLICATION: Twelve members or less

PROCEDURE:

a. The facilitator says: "Think of an animal which you feel most accurately represent you." or "Think of an animal that you would like to be."

b. Each member is to tell the rest of the group the animal he has chosen and the rationale behind his choice. Each member describes as much detail about the animal's behaviors, physical characteristics, it's habitat, etc., as he or she can.

c. Each member of the group then discusses what he learned about himself and others from this activity.

# 8a. OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY---SENTENCE COMPLETION

GOAL:

Self-Awareness/Self-Assessment

Complete the following sentences:

1. When I am angry I ______________________________________

   ______________________________________________________

2. When I am sad I ______________________________________

   ______________________________________________________

3. When I am nervous I __________________________________

   ______________________________________________________

4. When I meet someone for the first time I ________________

   ______________________________________________________

5. When there is a problem I _____________________________

   ______________________________________________________

6. When I am alone I _____________________________________

   ______________________________________________________

7. The best time of my life is/was ______________________________

______________________________

8. One thing that I have always wanted to do is ________________

______________________________

9. When I have time I ______________________________

______________________________

10. I worry about ______________________________

______________________________

11. I am happiest when ______________________________

______________________________

12. When I am scared I ______________________________

______________________________

13. Most of the time I ______________________________

______________________________

14. I had fun ______________________________

______________________________

15. The thing about ______________________________
______________________________________________

16. Last year ______________________________
______________________________________________

17. Right now ______________________________
______________________________________________

18. Next year ______________________________
______________________________________________

19. People in charge ______________________________
______________________________________________

20. When I am in charge ______________________________
______________________________________________

ACTIVITY---SENTENCE COMPLETION

GOAL:

Self Assessment and Self Awareness

1. Sometimes, looking back over my life, I can hardly believe that at one time ______________________________

2. It's not easy for me to admit that ____________________

3. It's not easy for me to be self-accepting when I __________
   ______________________________________________

4. One of my emotions that I have trouble accepting is ________
   ______________________________________________

5. One of my actions that I have trouble accepting is _________
   ______________________________________________

6. One of the thoughts I tend to push out of my mind is ________
   ______________________________________________

7. One of the things about my body that I have trouble accepting is ____________________________________

8. If I were more accepting about my body ______________________

______________________________________________

9. If I were more accepting of things I have done ______________

______________________________________________

10. If I were more accepting of my feelings ____________________

______________________________________________

11. If I were more honest about my wants and needs _____________

______________________________________________

12. The scary thing about being self-accepting is ______________

______________________________________________

13. If other people saw me being more self-accepting ___________

______________________________________________

14. The good thing about being self-accepting might be __________

______________________________________________

15. I am becoming aware ________________________________

______________________________________________

16. I am beginning to feel ________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

17. As I learn to stop denying my experience ____________________

________________________________________________________________

18. As I breathe deeply and allow myself to experience self-acceptance ____________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

# ACTIVITY---SENTENCE COMPLETION

GOAL:

Self-Assessment and Self-Awareness

I often wish...

Sometimes I feel like ...

I worry that...

My secret desire is...

If I could, I would change...

My parents...

My family...

I feel good about...

My greatest asset is...

My anger...

I expect...

Others sometimes...

I am curious about...

I feel that others see me as...

I sometimes think about...

My goals for me...

In five years...

I am proudest of...

I am...

I...

You seem to be to...

What I like best about you is...

My wish for you is...

My wish for me is...

## ACTIVITY---IMPRESSIONS

### GOALS:

a. To enhance self-awareness and awareness of others.

b. To rehearse descriptive vocabulary and oral communication skills.

### PROCEDURE:

a. Instruct participants to use the following format to give detailed descriptions of themselves and other people that they know. Photographs can be used in this activity.

Dominant impression: The person is ________________________

The person's age is ________________________________________

The person's posture is ____________________________________

The person's clothes: (color, quality, style)________________

____________________________________________________________

The person's hands: (size, texture)_________________________

____________________________________________________________

The person's eyes: (color, shape, movement)_________________

____________________________________________________________

The person's nose, mouth, hair, lips, etc. with the same detail ________________________________________________________

Include in the description scars, blemishes, lines and other noticable characteristics.

b. The description can include other body parts and descriptors: body build, weight, legs, ears, height, arms, and other appropriate characteristics.

# A COMMITMENT TO MYSELF

I am the world's best authority on the subject - Me!
More than any other person, I know what is best for myself.
I can be an individual who lets things happen to me, or I
    can determine to be in charge of my life, to be an
    autonomous and free person.
I can dream and also plan, make choices and decisions, express
    my wants and needs, assert my individual self, my rights
    and ideas.
I can create, play and share who I really am as a human being.
TODAY-I commit myself to be and act as I know I can be; the
    real me--the best me possible.
I know I need to be close to another person--at times.
I will seek to fulfill that need but love them no more than
    I love myself, nor meet their needs at the sacrifice of
    my own.
In whatever conflict I experience, I will meet the other person
    half way, but will not be a loser that they might be a
    winner.
I will not put myself down or discount my feelings or intelligence.
I don't need my own criticism of myself.
TODAY - I make these commitments to myself, to be my own best friend.

Jack Crawford

# A GOAL OF LIVING

I am me.

In all the world, there is no one else exactly like me. There are persons who have some parts like me, but no one adds up exactly like me. I have some parts like others, but I don't add up to be exactly like anyone else. Therfore, everything that comes out of me is authentically mine because I alone chose it.

I own everything about me--my body, including everything it does; mind, including all its thoughts and ideas; my eyes, including the image of all my eyes behold; my feelings, whatever they may be... anger, joy, frustration, love, disappointment, excitement; my mouth and all that comes out of it...words, polite, sweet or rough, correct and incorrect; my voice, loud or soft; and all my actions, whether they be to others or myself.

I own all my triumphs and successes, all my failures and mistakes.

I own my fantasies, my dreams, my hopes, my fears. Because I own all of me, I can become intimately acquainted with me. Being very well acquainted with me, I can love me and be friendly with me in all my parts.

I know that there are aspects about myself I do not know, and there are parts of me that puzzle me.

As long as I am friendly and loving to myself, I can courageously and hopefully look for the solution to the puzzles and continually look for ways to find out more about me--how I look and sound, what I say and do, and how I think and feel.

No one else looks and sound, says and does, and thinks and feels exactly like me.

However I look and sound, whatever I say and do, and whatever I think and feel at a given moment is me. It is authentic and represents where I am at that moment in time.

When I review later how I looked and sounded, what I said and did, and how I thought and felt, parts may turn out to be unfitting, and I can discard that which is unfitting and keep that which proved fitting and invent something new for that which I discarded.

I am me and I am okay.

I own me and therefore I can engineer me.

I can learn all the new things that I need and discard all the things that no longer fit.

I can see, hear, feel, think, say and do. I will then have the tools to survive, to be close to others, to be productive, and to make sense and order out of the world of people and things outside of me.

--Virginia M. Satir

Written in answer to a fifteen-year-old girl's question, "How can I prepare myself for a fulfilling life?"

# FORMER WELFARE MOTHER NOW GUIDES OTHERS TO DEGREES

Some 11,000 people on public assistance have received her council on how to get into college.

By PETER MONAGHAN

PULLMAN WASHINGTON

It shouldn't take a college degree to figure out why Carol Sasaki's life story has whetted the appetite of a Hollywood production company, which is planning a television movie about her.

Ms. Sasaki is a single mother and a former welfare recipient who, after twice failing the high-school-equivalency exam, managed to obtain a bachelor's and a master's degree from Washington State University here in three years.

Since she received her master's, she has devoted her life to helping other welfare recipients follow the same path.

Ms. Sasaki has organized a nationally recognized program to spread the word: "I got off welfare and into a university, and so can you."

Some 11,000 people have participated in Ms. Sasaki's network, known as HOME--"Helping Ourselves Means Education." Four-fifths of the participants have been women and all of them, as Ms. Sasaki puts it, have thought themselves locked out forever from college as a path to the "American Dream."

HOME, she says, is "a sorority and fraternity for low-income individuals" who want to break out of the trap they find themselves in. Many participants attend workshops where Ms. Sasaki unravels some of the mysteries of the college-admissions and financial-aid game. Most receive HOME's newsletter, which provides more of the same.

Those efforts have brought Ms. Sasaki attention in the local and national press. Last April, President Reagan gave her one of his 19 annual "Volunteer Action Awards."

Ms. Sasaki's story has generated such strong response because, before she turned her life around, it was so desperate.

As she explains at her workshops, her formal education was interrupted when she ran away at 13 from a relative who had sexually abused her. She tells of being sheltered by a strip-tease dancer, of taking refuge at a yoga commune; and of a stint in Mailbu, Cal., during which she was "very poor or very wealthy depending on the man I was with."

At 22, she continues, she became pregnant and her companion at the time told her to have an abortion or leave. She chose to leave and have the child because "I wanted someone to love me."

## INSPIRED BY ROLE MODELS

Having established her kinship with her audiences, she recounts her rapid progress to a master's degree in adult education at Washington State.

Things turned around for her, she says, partly because "I couldn't stomach another relationship with a man for survival," and partly because of the inspiration of role models, including a community college administrator who persuaded her that she would be better off at college, supported by various financial-aid programs.

While enrolled, she worked at a furious pace. She thought, incorrectly, that she must be breaking the law because she was collecting both financial aid and child support: "I didn't dare ask anyone so I kept taking double credits."

She advises listeners to form HOME "support groups," share child care, and gather information so they will be able, better than she was, to clear the hurdles between the dole and degrees.

HOME has only two rules: no politics, and no complaining.

Says Ms. Sasaki: "We have everything from John Birchers to extremes of liberalism."

And no one may gripe about all the snarls that welfare recipients encounter dealing with government agencies, let alone creditors.

Whenever she announces that rule to new participants, Ms. Sasaki says, "people start laughing and clapping. They're sick of sitting in meetings that go on and on. What they want, right now, is to get out of the environment they are in."

The Sasaki approach is a blend of sweet talk and tough-minded, do-it-yourself street talk. She writes in a recent newsletter: "I don't want to hear anyone say to me, 'But you said it was easy. You misled me--I thought you would take care of my problems.'

"Neither I, nor HOME, will take care of any of your personal problems for you and it will not be easy--it will be hard. Being poor is always hard and going to school is hard; both together will be harder still, but worth it!"

What HOME does do, she says, is tell people on low incomes the whys and wherefores of services offered by private and government agencies, and by all types of higher-education institutions.

HOME also tries to show welfare officials and college admissions and financial-aid officers how tough it is to graduate from welfare to college. It sets up workshops in which welfare officers and college officials play the roles of welfare recipients.

Participants in the HOME "communications channel" also are encouraged to confront their pasts. Literally thousands of women and men, often unaware of how common their story is, have recounted lives marred by rape, incest, marital brutality, and the crippling despondency of life on the streets.

Ms. Sasaki has not had time to keep close track of HOME's success, but she reports that about 90 percent of 700 participants who were telephoned in September "had taken action to get into college, or written to organizations in an attempt to get off welfare."

She challenges the prevailing image of the welfare recipient as "someone who is too stupid or lazy to get off welfare. The saddest thing is that people on welfare come to believe that, too."

Says Glenn Terrell, president emeritus of Washington State University and chairman of HOME's board of directors: "Through contact with Carol, participants have tangible evidence that it is possible to overcome the wounds of neglect, abuse, depersonalization, and dehumanization."

Ms. Sasaki says Home has encountered both help and hindrance.

Early on, the state employment-security department provided a $40,000 grant. But "right now," she says, "HOME exists more on $2 and $5 checks from women on welfare" than on large donations.

The state's universities have pitched in, too. Eastern Washington University, for instance, pays two staff members to assist the project.

A HECTIC SCHEDULE

The HOME concept may get its biggest boost from the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, which recently adopted it as a national project. That has set Ms. Sasaki on a hectic schedule of nationwide travel. Chapters are being established in Hawaii, Mississippi, and several other states.

The project has also encountered opposition. Some community colleges, Ms. Sasaki says, have appeared to be "afraid we're taking people away from them to the four-year colleges."

Ms. Sasaki wants HOME's central office, which is located in her own home, to close within five years, so that the project will avoid the trap of becoming just one more massive bureaucracy. One way to prevent that, she adds, is to make sure the board of directors always includes "people who have slept in a gas station with their kids or slept with someone they didn't like and felt like they were going crazy."

All the accolades aside, Ms. Sasaki says what she really needs is a secretary, and sleep.

Ms Sasaki's work has forced her to put aside for the time being her work on a Ph.D. in international studies at Washington State University. Her topic is the plight of unwed mothers in Asia.

"Right now," she says, "my story is bringing in media response, but very soon it will be very old." Before it ages too much, she says, she hopes she will be able to impress upon people who find themselves in similar circumstances that they could, at least, be "in a ball moving somewhere, instead of stuck in it."

Dale Wittner/People Weekly, 1986 TIME, Inc.

# Module II.
# Training Outline
# Suggested Script
# Assertiveness Skills

# TRAINING OUTLINE

## I. INSTRUCTION

a. Introduce topic.

b. Elicit comments, questions, and discussion.

## II. MODELING

a. Facilitator and volunteer demonstrate appropriate behavior/skills.

b. Show film or video that demonstrates appropriate behavior/skills.

## III. SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(S)

a. Use self-assessment as a group activity.

(Only when participants are ready and comfortable sharing personal information.)

b. Homework activity.

IV. EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY(S)

a. Group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, help, trusting, and support.

b. Role playing and rehearsal of behaviors and skills.

c. Homework activities.

V. FEEDBACK AND REINFORCEMENT

a. Facilitate group discussion.

b. Review.

c. Positive feedback from facilitator.

The following script is a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal:

We are not born with the skills that are necessary for us to get along with other people and to manage the survival demands of our environment. How we choose to develop and manage relationships, and how we handle environmental demands is the result of our experiences and our role models (parents, teachers, peers). Experience involves the interacting with or manipulating an object, person, place, or information of any kind.

When we encounter new and unfamiliar situations we use our past experiences to organize, order, and make sense of what is happening now. We use this process no matter what the skill to be learned. We may feel awkward and unsure of ourselves in our first attempts at performing a new skill, but as we practice we gradually forget about how we are performing, and the skill becomes natural and automatic.

Accepting and appreciating yourself are related to being aware of your strengths and assets. We all have many strengths--strengths that we are not using fully. We can develop new strengths (any skill, ability, talent, or personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your

personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your self-acceptance as you become more aware of your strengths and develop new ones. The more you see yourself as having real skills, abilities, talents, and other personal strengths, the more you will value and accept yourself.

The information that we explore and discuss and the activities that we perform throughout the training are to help you improve skills as well as learn new skills that will enable you to better manage relationships and environmental demands. Learning new skills will involve the followng steps:

1. We will discuss the importance of learning certain skills and how they will be of value to you.

2. We will examine what the skill is and how it is performed.

3. We will find ways to practice the skill.

4. We will practice the skill in groups, or you may choose to set up practice situations with people outside the group so that you can receive help and feedback about your performance.

# ASSERTIVENESS, NONASSERTIVENESS AND AGRESSIVENESS

Effective interpersonal communication is characterized by the ability to recognize the difference between aggressive, assertive, and nonassertive behaviors and the ability to express one's feelings, needs, and wants in an assertive manner. This training session focuses on strengthening the participants knowledge and awareness of the three styles of relating and provides suggested activities for rehearsing assertive skills.

Assertive behavior is the ability to express feelings in an effective and considerate way. Assertiveness involves the recognition and expression of an individual's wants, values, needs, expectations, dislikes, and desires. Assertive behavior is a skill that requires that the individual know, accept, respect and like himself. Assertive behavior reduces interpersonal anxiety, promotes more open and successful communication, and enhances self-respect and self-worth.

Assertive behavior has three components: it is interpersonal behavior involving the honest, straight forward expression of thoughts and feelings; it is socially appropriate; and the feelings and welfare of others are taken into account.

The nonassertive person, because of high levels of anxiety, guilt, or lack of social skills, tends to bottle up emotions ranging from warmth to anger. Nonassertive persons may have difficulty socializing comfortably at a party; speaking up in a discussion and voicing an opinion; saying no to a solicitor, and accepting compliments. They may find it difficult to ask for assistance or to say no to unreasonable requests and demands. They often feel taken advantage of and victimized. Nonassertive behaviors are an indication of negative self-image, a learned fear of conflict and ineffective communication skills.

Aggressive behavior is expressing one's thoughts and feelings in a negative way without responsible and appropriate consideration for the rights and feelings of others. Aggressive people are often overbearing and abrasive and concerned with winning and coming out on top. They tend to be loud, intrusive, rude, critical and domineering.

Aggressive behavior is not necessarily associated with feeling angry or hostile; however, it is often related to low self-esteem, fear, and insecurity.

The assertive individual relies on rational thinking, understands his rights, can describe situations from his viewpoint without blaming or projecting, and can state his feelings and wants. He can establish close interpersonal relationships; can protect himself from being taken advantage of by others; can make decisions and free choices in life; and can take full responsiblility for his own behavior.

Assertive skills include the ability to use appropriate nonverbal communication such as eye contact, touching, body posture, gestures and facial expressions to match verbal and emotional expressions.

Assertion is a four-stage process that includes identifying personal rights and the rights of others in specific situations; discriminating between nonassertive, assertive, and aggressive responses; identifying and changing the thoughts which are barriers to assertive behavior and practicing more assertive behavior.

Humans have the capacity to think, reason and feel, as well as the ability to use language to express these capacities. Experiencing and expressing feelings are necessary for emotional well being. However, in our society we tend to develop unhealthy strategies for managing our feelings. People tend to avoid acknowledging, experiencing, accepting, and openly expressing feelings - particularly feelings that are considered negative. When we detach ourselves from our feelings, our behaviors become superficial and often inappropriate to situations. We act nonassertively when we adopt this style of relating to others.

The basis for developing assertive skills is to learn about our emotions and how to manage them. Feelings are internal reactions to experiences that are expressed outwardly, both verbally and nonverbally. Our ability to think, reason, and use language makes it possible for us to monitor, assess, and change our attitudes and behaviors.

Assertiveness training involves learning to manage shyness, lack of self-confidence, fearfulness and anger, and learning strategies to build the nonassertive person's self-esteem. The activities in this training session are designed to help identify attitudes and behaviors that create barriers to assertive behavior and offer strategies for developing assertive skills.

## THE COMPONENTS OF ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR

Eye contact: Looking directly at another person when you are speaking to him is an effective way of declaring that you are sincere about what you are saying and that it is directed to him.

Body Posture: The "weight" of your messages to others will be increased if you face the person, stand or sit appropriately close to him, lean toward him, hold your head erect.

Gestures: A message accented with appropriate gestures takes on an added emphasis (overenthusiastic gesturing can be a distraction!)

Facial Expression: Ever see someone trying to express anger while smiling or laughing? It just doesn't come across. Effective assertions require an expression that agrees with the message.

Voice Tone, Inflection, Volume: A whispered monotone will seldom convince another person that you mean business, while a shouted epithet will bring his defenses into the path of communication. A level, well modulated conversational statement is convincing without intimidating.

Timing: Spontaneous expression will generally be your goal since hesitation may diminish the effects of an assertion. Judgment is necessary, however, to select an appropriate occasion, for example, such as speaking to your boss in the privacy of his office, rather than in front of a group of his subordinates where he may need to respond defensively.

Content: We save this obvious dimension of assertiveness for last to emphasize that, although what you say is clearly important, it is often less important than most of us generally believe. We encourage a fundamental honesty in interpersonal communication and spontaneity of expression. In our view, that means saying forcefully, "I'm damn mad about what you just did!" rather than "You're a S.O.B.!" People who have for years hesitated because they "didn't know what to say" have found the practice of saying something, to express their feelings at that time, to be a valuable step toward greater spontaneous assertiveness.

One further word about content. We do encourage you to express your own feelings and to accept responsibility for them. Note the difference in the above example between "I'm mad" and "You're an S.O.B." It is not necessary to put the other person down (aggressive) in order to express your feelings (assertive).

Your imagination can carry you to a wide variety of situations which demonstrate the importance of the manner in which you express your assertions. Let it suffice to say here that the time you may be spending thinking about "just the right words" will be better spent making those assertions! The ultimate goal is expressing yourself, honestly and spontaneously, in a manner that is "right" for you.

## AGGRESSIVE STYLE

Aggression is standing up for oneself in such a way that the rights of the other person are violated in the process. It is an attempt to humiliate or put down the other person. The aggressive person attacks the other person rather than the person's behavior. He is inappropriately honest, self-enhancing at the expense of another, and in most situations is readily expressive.

> The aggressive person is someone who may explode at the slightest provocation and may be prone to physical fighting when angry or frustrated. The aggressive individual may also embarrass and put down others by name-calling or using obsenities when his needs are not being met. Aggressive individuals dominate most conversations without letting others talk and continue to "attack" and criticize people even after they have tried to back away from the situation. These behaviors may indicate that the person is experiencing anxiety, guilt, or deficiencies in social skills. The person who has an aggressive style of responding may have periods of nonaggresive behavior, hiding his feelings in many situations and later exploding over a trivial event.
>
> Adapted from Assertion Training, Sherwin Colter and Julio J. Guerra.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

that type of interpersonal behavior by which a person stands up for his rights in such a way that the rights of the other person are violated

an attack on the person rather than on the person's behavior

inappropriately emotionally honest, self-enhancing at the expense of another, expressive

WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

you may feel rightious, superior, deprecatory at the time
you may feel guilty later
you choose for others
you may achieve desired goal by hurting others

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

hurt, humiliated

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

angry, vengeful

## WHY DO YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY?

1. You feel powerless.
2. You have been passive for a long period of time, have become fed-up, and believe you are justified in "getting" other people.
3. You have become very sensitive about particular topics and seem to almost automatically react defensively to these issues.
4. You believe that aggressive behavior is the only way to "get through" to someone.

## CONSEQUENCES OF ACTING AGGRESSIVELY:

1. Emotional release
2. Failure to establish close relationships
3. Feeling unloved and unappreciated
4. Alienated from others
5. Trouble with employment
6. Feelings of guilt or embarrassment

### NONASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

that type of interpersonal behavior which enables a person's rights to be violated in two ways; (a) the person violates his/her own rights when he/she permits herself to ignore personal rights which are actually very important to him/her, or (b) the person permits others to infringe on his/her rights.

emotionally dishonest, indirect, self-denying, inhibited

### WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

you may feel hurt and anxious at the time
you may be angry later
you allow others to choose for you
you do not generally achieve desired goal

### THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

guilty or superior

### THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

irritation, pity, disgust

NONASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR MAY:

be a subtle type of manipulation--i.e. person abdicates rights to influence certain kinds of behavior from other person. These kinds of unspoken bargains are seldom explicitly stated, and the other person generally takes self-sacrifice for granted. The nonasserter can then end up feeling bitter and cheated.

spoil the person to whom the remark was made by training them that they can make unreasonable demands and get away with it.

create a "nice" but nonrespected image which is hard to break from. Others begin to expect nonassertion as the norm.

because the true feelings are not expressed, they carry over to other situations and/or result in an angry outburst at a later time.

## WHY DO YOU ACT NON-ASSERTIVELY?

1. You mistake assertion for aggression.
2. You mistake nonassertion for politeness.
3. You use nonassertive behavior as a means of "getting people."
4. You don't accept the idea that you have personal rights.
5. You are anxious about the negative consequences of behaving assertively.
   (Others may be offended, you may not be accepted, people will not like you, etc.)
6. You mistake nonassertion for being helpful and a nice person.
7. You have not learned the skill of acting assertively.

## CONSEQUENCES OF ACTING NON-ASSERTIVELY:

1. Loss of self-esteem
2. Internal tension
3. Somatic and affective symptoms

## SOMATIC/ANXIETY SYMPTOMS:

flushing
sweating
dry mouth
shallow breathing
chest tightness
tremors
heart palpitation
"freezing" or "going blank"
pounding pulse
headache
feeling of weakness
intestinal distress
muscular tightness
startle reaction
dizziness

## AFFECTIVE AND COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS:

panic
depression
irritability
agitation
worry
dread
inattention
forgetfulness
distractability
nightmares

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

that type of interpersonal behavior by which a person stands up for their legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of another are not violated.

behavior which enables a person to act in their own best interests, to stand up for self without undue anxiety, to exercise or stand up for personal rights without denying the rights of others.

direct, honest, appropriate expression of one's feelings, opinions, or beliefs; shows consideration, but not deference for another person. Communicates respect for a person but not necessarily for a person's behavior.

appropriately emotionally honest, direct, self-enhancing, expressive.

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS NOT:

behavior which violates the rights of others

behavior which allows your rights to be violated

a. when you are taken advantage of by not saying no

b. when you fail to assert your needs

WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

you feel confident

you feel self-respecting at the time and later

you choose for yourself

you may achieve your goal

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

valued, respected

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

generally respectful

Alberti, Robert E., and Emmons, Michael L., Your Perfect Right, San Luis Obispo, CA, Impact, 1975.

## ASSUMPTIONS VERSUS LEGITIMATE RIGHTS

Here is a list of traditional assumptions you may have learned as a child which now keep you from being an assertive adult. Each of these mistaken assumptions violates one of your legitimate rights as an adult individual:

| Mistaken Traditional Assumptions | Your Legitimate Rights |
|---|---|
| It is selfish to put your needs before others' needs. | You have a right to put yourself first, sometimes. |
| It is shameful to make mistakes. You should have an appropriate response for every occasion. | You have a right to make mistakes. |
| If you can't convince others that your feelings are reasonable then they must be wrong, or maybe you are going crazy. | You have a right to be the final judge of your feelings and accept them as legitimate. |
| You should respect the views of others, especially if they are in a position of authority. Keep | You have a right to have your own opinions and convictions. |

| | |
|---|---|
| your differences of opinion to yourself. Listen and learn. | |
| You should always try to be logical and consistent. | You have a right to change your mind or decide on a different course of action. |
| You should be flexible and adjust. Others have good reasons for their actions and it's not polite to question them. | You have a right to protest unfair treatment or criticism. |
| You should never interrupt people. Asking questions reveals your stupidity to others. | You have a right to interrupt in order to ask for clarification. |
| Things could get even worse, don't rock the boat. | You have a right to negotiate for change. |
| You shouldn't take up others' valuable time with | You have a right to ask for help or emotional support. |

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|---|---|
| your problems. | |
| People don't want to hear that you feel bad, so keep it to yourself. | You have a right to feel and express pain. |
| When someone takes the time to give you advice, you should take it very seriously. They are often right. | You have a right to ignore the advice of others. |
| Knowing that you did something well is its own reward. People don't like show-offs. Successful people are secretly disliked and envied. Be modest when complimented. | You have a right to receive formal recognition for your work and achievements. |
| You should always try to accommodate others. If you don't, they won't be there when you need them. | You have a right to say "no." |
| Don't be anti-social. People are going to think you don't like | You have a right to be alone, even if others would prefer your |

| | |
|---|---|
| them if you say you'd rather be alone instead of with them. | company. |
| You should always have a good reason for what you feel and do. | You have a right not to have to justify yourselves to others. |
| When someone is in trouble, you should help them. | You have a right not to take responsibility for someone else's problem. |
| You should be sensitive to the needs and wishes of others, even when they are unable to tell you what they want. | You have a right not to have to anticipate others' needs and wishes. |
| It's always a good policy to stay on people's good side. | You have a right not to always worry about the goodwill of others. |
| It's not nice to put people off. If questioned, give an answer. | You have a right to choose not to respond to a situation. |

From The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook by Davis, Eshelman, and McKay. New Harbinger Publications, 1980.

# THE BASIC TENENTS OF AN ASSERTIVE PHILOSOPHY

1. By standing up for our rights we show we respect ourselves and achieve respect from other people.

2. By trying to govern our lives so as to never hurt anyone, we end up hurting ourselves and other people.

3. Sacrificing our rights usually results in destroying relationships or preventing ones from forming.

4. Not letting others know how we feel and what we think is a form of selfishness.

5. Sacrificing our rights usually results in training other people to mistreat us.

6. If we don't tell other people how their behavior negatively effects us we are denying them an opportunity to change their behavior.

7. We can decide what's important to us - we do not have to suffer from the "tyranny of the should and should not."

8. When we do what we think is right for us, we feel better about ourselves and have more authentic and satisfying relationships with others.

9. We all have a natural right to courtesy and respect.

10. We all have a right to express ourselves as long as we don't violate the rights of others.

11. There is more to be gained from life by being free and able to stand up for ourselves and from honoring the same rights of other people.

12. When we are assertive everyone involved usually benefits.

Jakubowski, P. "Self Assertive Training Procedures for Women," Psychotherapy With Women, D. Carter and E. Rawlings (Eds.), Springfield, Illinois: Thomas, in Press (1974).

## ACTIVITY---ASSERTIVENESS INVENTORY

The following questions will be helpful in assessing your assertiveness. Be honest in your responses. All you have to do is draw a circle around the number that describes you best. For some questions the assertive end of the scale is at 0, for others at 4. Key: 0 means no or never; 1 means somewhat or sometimes; 2 means average; 3 means usually or a good deal; 4 means practically always or entirely.

1. When a person is highly unfair, do you call it to his attention? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do you find it difficult to make decisions? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Are you openly critical of others' ideas, opinions, behavior? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do you speak out in protest when someone takes your place in line? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do you often avoid people or situations for fear of embarrassment? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do you usually have confidence in your own judgement? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Do you insist that your spouse or roommate take on a fair share of household chores? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Are you prone to "fly off the handle?" 0 1 2 3 4
9. When a salesperson makes an offer, do you find it hard to say "no." 0 1 2 3 4
10. When a latecomer is waited on before you are, do you call attention to the situation? 0 1 2 3 4
11. Are you reluctant to speak in a discussion or debate? 0 1 2 3 4
12. If a person has borrowed money (or book, garment, etc.) and is overdue on returning it, do you mention it? 0 1 2 3 4
13. Do you continue to persue an argument after the other person has had enough? 0 1 2 3 4
14. Do you generally express your feelings? 0 1 2 3 4

15. Are you disturbed if someone watches you at work? 0 1 2 3 4

16. If someone keeps kicking or bumping your chair in a movie or lecture, do you ask the person to stop? 0 1 2 3 4

17. Do you find it difficult to keep eye contact when talking to another person? 0 1 2 3 4

18. In a good restaurant when your meal is improperly prepared or served, do you ask the waiter/waitress to correct the situation? 0 1 2 3 4

19. When you discover merchandise is faulty, do you return it for an adjustment? 0 1 2 3 4

20. Do you show your anger by name-calling or obscenities? 0 1 2 3 4

21. Do you try to be a wallflower or a piece of furniture in social situations? 0 1 2 3 4

22. Do you insist that your landlord (mechanic, repairman, etc.) make repairs, adjustments or replacements which are his responsibility? 0 1 2 3 4

23. Do you often step in and make decisions for others? 0 1 2 3 4

24. Are you able to ask your friends for small favors or help? 0 1 2 3 4

25. Are you able to openly express love and affection? 0 1 2 3 4

26. Do you think you always have the right answer? 0 1 2 3 4

27. When you differ with a person you respect, are you able to speak up for your viewpoint? 0 1 2 3 4

28. Are you able to refuse unreasonable requests made by friends? 0 1 2 3 4

29. Do you have difficulty complimenting or praising others? 0 1 2 3 4

30. If you are disturbed by someone smoking near you, can you say so? 0 1 2 3 4

31. Do you shout or use bullying tactics to get others to do as you wish? 0 1 2 3 4

32. Do you finish other people's sentences for them? 0 1 2 3 4

33. Do you get into physical fights with others, especially strangers? 0 1 2 3 4

34. At family meals do you control conversation? 0 1 2 3 4

35. When you meet a stranger, are you the first to introduce yourself and begin a conversation? 0 1 2 3 4

36. Do you compliment or praise others when they do something you like or appreciate? 0 1 2 3 4

37. Do you say "I am sorry" a good deal of the time when you really do not mean it? 0 1 2 3 4

38. Can you tell someone directly that you do not like what he/she is doing? 0 1 2 3 4

39. Do you usually try to avoid "bossy" people? 0 1 2 3 4

40. Do you usually keep your opinions to yourself? 0 1 2 3 4

41. When you receive a compliment do you tend to discount it in your own mind? 0 1 2 3 4

42. If a person is criticizing you unjustly, can you defend yourself verbally rather than hitting the person or walking away angry and upset? 0 1 2 3 4

43. Can you tell things about yourself that you like in front of others? 0 1 2 3 4

Your Perfect Right, R. E. Alberti and M. L. Emmons.

# ACTIVITY---PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION: Many people experience difficulty in handling interpersonal situations requiring them to assert themselves in some way, for example, turning down a request, asking a favor, giving someone a compliment, expressing disapproval or approval, etc.

ASSIGNMENT: Comment on any person, place, thing or event that annoys you to the point that you have difficulty discussing it in communicating with others.

INCLUDE: 1) State who or what is involved

2) State your view of the situation and what it is about the other person's behavior or the event that is annoying to you.

3) State the feelings you experienced.

4) State what you would like to see differently.

## ACTIVITY---ASSERTIVE PRACTICE EXERCISES

1. Practice eye contact with people you meet on the street, at work, at a party, etc. As you become more comfortable and proficient in this activity, simultaneously smile and say "Hello."
2. Call a store to ask information about a product. Go into a restaurant and order a salad with a certain kind of dressing. Then, as the waiter walks away, call him back and change the order.
3. Go into a restaurant and request a particular table.
4. Go into a market and buy one item. Then, find a long line where several people are waiting with filled baskets. Go to the front of the line and ask if you can go through with your single item. (Use cash instead of a check if you are allowed to go first.)
5. Buy an item in a retail store and return it later to exchange it for something or ask for a refund.
6. Make, and then cancel, reservations at a fancy hotel or restaurant.
7. Pick out a stranger at a party, at work, or on a bus, and begin a conversation with the person.
8. Borrow an item from a neighbor.
9. When your spouse, friend, boss, child, or fellow employee does something you like, make a specific point of telling him what you liked.
10. Tell someone about a recent activity you completed and enjoyed.
11. During the course of a conversation with someone, keep track of the open-ended questions, free information, and self-disclosure statements that are being made by you and the other person.
12. Say something positive about yourself or give some free information to someone you know.
13. Ask each group member to try one new assertive behavior

each week that he has previously avoided or has difficulty initiating.

14. Tell someone that you disagree with their opinion using an "I" statement.

15. Express a feeling to someone using an "I" statement.

## ACTIVITY---BUILDING YOUR SELF-ESTEEM

GOALS:

a. To identify personal strengths

b. To rehearse oral communication skills

PROCEDURE:

a. The facilitator emphasizes the importance of honesty in this exercise and encourages participants to be realistic and avoid undue modesty.

b. Each participant is to develop a list of things that they do well, all the things that they are proud of having done, all the things for which they feel a sense of accomplishment.

c. Participants divide into pairs to share past accomplishments. With the help of a partner, examine the strengths that were used in successfully reaching the accomplishments.

d. Each participant will share the full list of accomplishments, strengths, etc. with the group.

e. Each participant will ask for feedback from the group to help identify additional strengths and to identify areas that he or she may develop additional skills and strengths.

ACTIVITY---SELF-ESTEEM SENTENCE COMPLETION

GOALS:

a. To identify feelings associated with self-esteem.

b. To increase awareness of nonproductive and negative thoughts that lower self-esteem

PROCEDURE:

a. Facilitator can have participants complete the activity as a homework assignment or use it as a group exercise with designated recorders if some participants exhibit difficulty with writing and/or reading skills.

b. Facilitator invites participants to share ideas on how to use the activity to benefit them.

c. The participants are instructed to use as many endings as they can think of for each incomplete sentence.

d. Participants then share their responses with the group when it is comfortable to do so.

e. Participants are asked to identify responses that contribute to positive feelings and then responses that contribute to negative self-feelings.

f. Participants are to develop three or four positive self-statements that they will share with other people at appropriate times during the day. Group members are encouraged to give positive feedback to help each other develop positive self-statements.

## ACTIVITY---INDEX OF SELF-ESTEEM

GOALS:

a. To measure self-esteem.

b. To increase awareness of nonproductive negative "I" statements.

PROCEDURE:

a. Facilitator can have participants complete the activity as a homework assignment or use it as a group exercise with designated recorders if some participants exhibit difficulty with writing and/or reading skills.

b. Facilitator invites participants to share ideas on how to use the activity to benefit them.

c. The participants are instructed to use as many endings as they can think of for each incomplete sentence.

d. Participants then share their responses with the group when it is comfortable to do so.

e. Have participants explore the negative "I" statements and replace them with positive "I" statements.

f. Participants are to develop three or four positive self-statements that they will share with other people at appropriate times during the day. Group members are encouraged to give positive feedback to help each other develop positive self-statements.

## SELF-ESTEEM SENTENCE COMPLETION

Complete the following sentences using as many endings as you can think of. You may complete this activity alone using pencil and paper to record your responses or you may choose to complete it in the presence of another person so that they can record the responses for you.

If the child within could speak, he/she would say ___

One of the things I had to do to survive was ___

One of the things my child self needs from me is ___

When I am compassionate and loving toward myself ___

I like myself most when ___

I like myself least when ___

It's not easy for me to admit ___

Looking back over my life, I can hardly believe that at one time I ____

One of my emotions I have trouble accepting is ___

One of my actions I have trouble accepting is ___

One of the thoughts I tend to push out of my mind is ___

One of the things about my body I have trouble accepting is ___

If I were more accepting of things I have done ___

If I were more accepting of my feelings ___

If I were more honest about my wants and needs ___

I am becoming aware ____

I am beginning to feel ___

The good thing about being self-accepting might be ___

If other people saw me being more self-accepting ___

If I change the way I act ___

When I try new ways of behaving ___

I act the way I do because ___

As I learn more about myself ___

## INDEX OF SELF-ESTEEM

This questionaire is designed to measure how you see yourself. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by placing a number by each one as follows:

1. Rarely or none of the time
2. A little of the time
3. Some of the time
4. Good part of the time
5. Most or all of the time

1. I feel that people would not like me if they really knew me well. ______
2. I feel that others get along better than I do. ______
3. I feel that I am a beautiful person. ______
4. When I am with other people I feel they are glad I am with them. ______
5. I feel that people really like to talk with me. ______
6. I feel that I am a very competent person. ______
7. I think I make a good impression on others. ______
8. I feel that I need more self-confidence. ______
9. When I am with strangers I am very nervous. ______
10. I think that I am a dull person. ______
11. I feel ugly. ______
12. I feel that others have more fun than I do. ______
13. I feel that I bore people. ______
14. I think my friends find me interesting. ______
15. I think I have a good sense of humor. ______
16. I feel very self-conscious when I am with strangers. ______

17. I feel that if I could be more like other people I would have it made. _____

18. I feel that people have a good time when they are with me. _____

19. I feel like a wallflower when I go out. _____

20. I feel I get pushed around more than others. _____

21. I think I am a rather nice person. _____

22. I feel that people really like me very much. _____

23. I feel that I am a likeable person. _____

24. I am afraid I will appear foolish to others. _____

25. My friends think very highly of me. _____

## ESTEEM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Identify the pressures and demands that you put on yourself.

1. If you tend to be perfectionistic and overly critical of yourself:
    - a) Identify the pressures and demands that you put on yourself.
    - b) Ask yourself several times a day, "What negative put down, critical statements (self-talk) have I given to myself?"
    - c) Ask yourself, "Where in my body am I feeling pressure or tension?"
    - d) Repeat positive statements that refute the irrational negative statements that you've identified.

2. If you tend to be punitive and rejecting towards yourself:
    - a) Listen for self-critical statements that you verbalize to others and the "recorded" internal self critical statements.
    - b) Find ways to talk to yourself gently rather than harshly. Treat yourself with respect and kindness.
    - c) Consciously do little kindnesses for yourself and indulge yourself whenever you can. Ask someone to do something for you or help you with something.
    - d) Change your attitude towards problems. Reverse the tendency to see problems as barriers. Learn to view them as challenge and opportunity for you to learn to grow.
    - e) Avoid blaming yourself when plans don't work out as you expected or when uncontrolled events occur. Tell yourself that you can't control what is happening, but you can control how you respond to what is happening.

# LEARNING TO LOVE YOURSELF MORE

What can one do with feelings of inadequacy besides worry about them? People work in many ways to improve their self-esteem. For example, they may:

1. pursue satisfying and useful occupations that realistically reflect their strengths and interests ("Young children make me nervous but I'd like to teach, so I'll consider secondary or higher education.");

2. work hard to develop the skills and interests they have rather than fret about those they don't;

3. work on being more honest and open with other people;

4. make efforts to appreciate the good things they have rather than focus on the more negative things in their lives;

5. avoid excessive daydreaming and fantasy living ("Boy, things would be different if only I were a little taller," or "If only I had not gotten married so young, things would be better");

6. continue their efforts even when they are discouraged ("Nothing works for me anyway");

7. reevaluate the standards by which they have learned to think of themselves as inadequate--they try to be satisfied to be smart enough, slender enough, or successful enough rather than continue to impose unrealistic standards on themselves;

8. decide to be their own good friends, complimenting themselves when they do things well enough and not criticizing themselves too harshly;

9. Relax ("If I feel this way, it means this is a human way to feel, and everybody else has probably felt this way too at one time or another.")

Source: Don E. Hamachek, Encounters with the Self (New York: Holt, 1971.

# A SELF-ESTEEM CHECK LIST

In this brief self-test you can broadly evaluate your own level of self-esteem. Do you

1. believe strongly in certain values and principles, so that you are willing to defend them?

2. act on your own best judgment, without regretting your actions if others disapprove?

3. avoid worrying about what is coming tomorrow; or fussing over yesterday's or today's mistakes?

4. have confidence in your general ability to deal with problems, even in the face of failures and setbacks?

5. feel generally equal--neither inferior nor superior-- to others?

6. take it more or less for granted that other people are interested in you and value you?

7. accept praise without pretense of false modesty and accept compliments without feeling guilty?

8. resist the efforts of others to dominate you, especially your peers?

9. accept the idea--and admit to others--that you are capable of feeling a wide range of impulses and desires, ranging from anger to love, sadness to happiness, resentful to accepting? (It does not follow, however, that you will act on all these feelings and desires.)

10. genuinely enjoy yourself in a wide range of activities, including work, play, creative self-expression, companionship, and just plain loafing?

11. sense and consider the needs of others?

Source: Don E. Hamachek, Encounters with the Self (New York: Holt, 1971), pp. 248-51

# REMEDIATION

| IF IN CHILDHOOD YOU EXPERIENCED | YOU CAN TODAY |
|---|---|
| Perfectionism<br>Overcoercion | Take off pressure and demands which you put on yourself. |
| Puntitiveness<br>Perfectionism<br>Rejection | Put your emphasis on kindliness, respect and gentleness in the way you treat yourself and limit your self-criticism. |
| Overindulgence | Make demands on yourself to accomplish things; limit your dependence on others. |
| Oversubmission | Enforce firm limits on your impulsiveness, work to overcome your tendency not to respect feeling and rights of others. |
| Neglect<br>Rejection | Consciously do little kindnesses for yourself, indulge yourself when you can and reduce your self-criticism. |
| Hypochondriacism | Refuse to give in to your aches and pains. |

Adapted from Your Inner Child of the Past by Hugh Missledine

## ASSERTIVE RIGHTS

1. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO JUDGE YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR, THOUGHTS, AND EMOTIONS, AND TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR INITIATION AND CONSEQUENCES UPON YOURSELF.
2. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO OFFER NO REASONS OR EXCUSES FOR JUSTIFYING YOUR BEHAVIOR.
3. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO JUDGE IF YOU ARE RESONSIBLE FOR FINDING SOLUTIONS TO OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS.
4. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE YOUR MIND.
5. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE MISTAKES--AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM.
6. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY, "I DON'T KNOW."
7. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE INDEPENDENT OF THE GOODWILL OF OTHERS BEFORE COPING WITH THEM.
8. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ILLOGICAL IN MAKING DECISIONS.
9. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY, "I DON'T UNDERSTAND."
10. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY, "I DON'T CARE."

From *When I Say No I Feel Guilty* by Manual Smith, Ph.D.

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Bloom, L., K. Coburn and J. Pearlman, *The New Assertive Woman*. New York, NY: Deli Publishing Co., 1976.

Informative section on why assertive training is so important for women. Includes Everywoman's Bill of Rights - and the games women play to avoid claiming those rights.

Interesting section on Assertion waterloos - common blocks to assertion-and how to overcome those blocks by eliminating Irrational Beliefs.

Bower, Sharon Anthony, and Gordon H. Bower, *Asserting Yourself: A Practical Guide for Positive Change*, Addision-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, Mass.

Ellis, A. and R. A. Harper, *A Guide to Rational Living*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1961.

Thorough explanation of how one can change behaviorally by changing thinking. Explanation of how we have strong, inappropriate, negative reactions because of our own irrational assumptions of how things "should" be.

Suggests a method for substituting more realistic, rational assumptions for the dysfunctional, irrational ones which keep us from reacting more appropriately.

Fensterheim, H. and J. Baer, *Don't Say Yes When You Want To Say No*, New York, NY: David McKay, 1975.

Perhaps the best book to read if one is going to read just one book on assertion training. A step-by-step, self-help book; it teaches the reader to take control of his/her own life by changing his/ her actions--on the job and interpersonal relationships, including the intimate ones of love, sex and marriage.

Also includes an excellent relaxation section which can be taped for use of the learner.

______, H., "Behavior Therapy: Assertive Training in Groups" in C. J. Sayer and H. S. Kaplan (Eds.) *Progress in Group and*

*Family Therapy*. Brunner/Mazell: New York, NY, 1972.

Dr. Fensterheim describes a typical (if there is such a thing) assertive training group. He describes the format of the group, which includes a review of previous sessions' homework assignments, special problems arising from assignments, and problems in assertiveness encountered during the previous week.

Friedman, P. H., "The Effects of Modeling and Role-Playing on Assertive Behavior" in R. D. Rubin, H. Fensterheim, A. A. Lazarus, and C. M. Franks (Eds.) *Advances in Behavior Therapy*. New York, NY: Academic Press, 1971.

An excellent report of an experimental study concerning the value of role-playing and modeling in helping people to behave more assertively. Provides a good background for teachers who want to use these techniques in their classrooms.

Jakubowski, Patricia, and Arthur J. Lange, *The Assertive Option: Your Rights and Responsibilities*, Research Press Company, Champaign, Illinois.

Serber, M., "Teaching the Nonverbal Components of Assertive Training," *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 1962, 3, 179,-183.

Very informative reading for those who want their messages to be correctly perceived. Since only a small part of the messages people get from us come from the actual words we use, it is important that the words we use, and our body language, and voice tone inflection and pace are congruent -- not contradictory.

Sklansky, Gloria, *Assertion Training*, The Lansford Publishing Company, San Jose, California.

Smith, M., *When I say No I Feel Guilty*. New York, NY: Deal Press, 1975.

Good discussion of how to deal with people who violate our prime assertive human rights by trying to manipulate us. Included is a Bill of Assertive Rights and an informative glossary of systematic assertive skills.

Taubman, B., *How To Become An Assertive Woman*. New York, NY: Pocket Books, 1976.

Good discussion of the particular problems of women becoming assertive in their interpersonal relationships, since assertive behavior has not traditionally been considered "feminine" behavior. Good section on important "basics" for women; assertive goal setting and life planning and a long section of specific assertive problems common to women.

# *Module III.*

# *Training Outline*

# *Suggested Script*

# *Problem Solving and Decision Making*

The following is a suggested outline for structuring each training session; however, the facilitator is encouraged to be creative, flexible and open to suggestions from the participants.

## TRAINING OUTLINE

I. INSTRUCTION

   a. Introduce topic.

   b. Elicit comments, questions, and discussion.

II. MODELING

   a. Facilitator and volunteer demonstrate appropriate behavior/skills.

   b. Show film or video that demonstrates appropriate behavior/skills.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(S)

   a. Use self-assessment as a group activity.

   (Only when participants are ready and comfortable sharing personal information.)

   b. Homework activity.

IV. EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY(S)

  a. Group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, help, trusting, and support.
  b. Role playing and rehearsal of behaviors and skills.
  c. Homework activities.

V. FEEDBACK AND REINFORCEMENT

  a. Facilitate group discussion.
  b. Review.
  c. Positive feedback from facilitator.

The following script is a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal:

We are not born with the skills that are necessary for us to get along with other people and to manage the survival demands of our environment. How we choose to develop and manage relationships, and how we handle environmental demands is the result of our experiences and our role models (parents, teachers, peers). Experience involves the interacting with or manipulating an object, person, place, or information of any kind.

When we encounter new and unfamiliar situations we use our past experiences to organize, order, and make sense of what is happening now. We use this process no matter what the skill to be learned. We may feel awkward and unsure of ourselves in our first attempts at performing a new skill, but as we practice we gradually forget about how we are performing, and the skill becomes natural and automatic.

Accepting and appreciating yourself are related to being aware of your strengths and assets. We all have many strengths--strengths that we are not using fully. We can develop new strengths (any skill, ability, talent, or personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your

self-acceptance as you become more aware of your strengths and develop new ones. The more you see yourself as having real skills, abilities, talents, and other personal strengths, the more you will value and accept yourself.

The information that we explore and discuss and the activities that we perform throughout the training are to help you improve skills as well as learn new skills that will enable you to better manage relationships and environmental demands. Learning new skills will involve the followng steps:

1. We will discuss the importance of learning certain skills and how they will be of value to you.

2. We will examine what the skill is and how it is performed.

3. We will find ways to practice the skill.

4. We will practice the skill in groups, or you may choose to set up practice situations with people outside the group so that you can receive help and feedback about your performance.

# PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

Problem solving and decision making skills make it possible for an individual to "be all that he can be." Initiating personal choices and accepting responsibility for them enhances self-esteem and defines and structures the person's life. Effective decision making is a learned skill that many people develop through trial and error, especially the life skills that are needed to make life/work decisions.

Indecisiveness and procrastination in many cases are the outgrowth of the person's fear of failure or fear of getting hurt. Lack of confidence, fear of criticism, faulty attitudes about problems, and lack of self-knowledge impedes effective decision making and problem solving behavior.

Decision making is a process with a purpose and includes making choices from several alternatives based upon the decision maker's values. Appropriate and socially responsible decisions are made when the individual is aware of his feelings, attitudes, values, beliefs, and actions, and has developed respect for others by exhibiting empathy and tolerance for diversity. Personal decisions defining work/leisure and life style are effectively implemented when the individual is knowledgeable about himself.

ACTIVITY: DECISION MAKING STRATEGIES

PROCEDURE:

A. Have participants identify their problem solving styles using the list of decision making strategies.

B. Have participants examine the pros and cons of their problem solving style.

C. Have participants determine if they are satisified with their current style of solving problems.

D. Have participants select problem solving areas that they wish to improve.

## DECISION MAKING STRATEGIES

### IMPULSIVE

Taking the first alternative with little thought or examination. (Don't look before you leap.)

### COMPLAINT

Letting someone else decide. (Anything you say.)

### DELAYING

Postponing thought and action. (We'll cross that bridge later.)

### AGONIZING

Becoming overwhelmed analyzing alternatives. (I don't know what to do.)

### PLANNING

Using a rational procedure with a balance between reason and emotion (weighing the facts).

### INTUITIVE

Basing a decision on inner harmony. (It feels right.)

### PARALYSIS

Accepting responsibility but unable to approach a decision. (I can't face up to it.)

From: PSYCHOLOGY OF ADJUSTMENT, Eastwood Atwater,
Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632,
"personal growth in a changing world"

ACTIVITY: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

PROCEDURE: A. Have participants identify problem area using the problem identification guide.

B. Have group participants help each other develop problem solving plans using the decision making questionnaire and the decision making guide..

## PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION: Many people experience difficulty in handling interpersonal situations requiring them to assert themselves in some way; for example, turning down a request, asking a favor, giving someone a compliment, expressing disapproval or approval, etc.

ASSIGNMENT: Comment on any person, place, thing or event that annoys you to the point that you have difficulty discussing it in communicating with others.

INCLUDE: 1) State who or what is involved.

2) State your view of the situation and what it is about the other person's behavior or the event that is annoying to you.

3) State the feelings your experienced.

4) State what you would like to see differently.

ACTIVITY---DECISION MAKING QUESTIONNAIRE

| | |
|---|---|
| DESIRE... | What could be happening? |
| EXPECTATION... | What should be happening? |
| REALITY... | What is/ should be/ could be happening? |

Why is a decision necessary?

What is/is not the problem?

What is/ should be/ could be happening?

Problem Finding
Problem Stating
Option Finding
Deciding
Taking Action
Evaluating Results

# YOUR DECISION MAKING GRID

Use this grid in making a decision. Write in each step.

| Step: | My Decision |
|---|---|
| 1. Identify the Decision | |
| 2. Collect Information | |
| 3. Study Information and List Alternatives | |
| 4. Choose An Alternative | |

5. Make a Plan

6. Evaluate the Decision

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING DECISIONS:

1. State your problem as clearly and completely as you can. Your problem need not be acute or a crisis, just something you would like to deal with. You may even find it helpful to write things down.

2. See each problem not as something that just happened to you, but as the consequence of a decision you have made. Such a problem could be something you decided to do, something you decided to be, or some way you decided to regard other people.

3. Look for the basic decision behind the decision. Did you decide to have the problem in order to avoid something? If so, what were you avoiding?

4. List the advantages and payoffs of the decision. These may be actual positive gains or may include the avoidance of anxiety. In either case, they are still payoffs.

5. What was the context in which you made the original decision? Were you very young? What was the situation then? Was your decision a sound one given the circumstances?

6. Ask yourself if the context is different now that you're older. Maybe the payoffs are not so important or have become more trouble than they are worth.

7. List the alternatives to each decision you've made. Examine them in terms of the advantages and disadvantages of each.

8. Now choose one of the alternatives and decide to put it into practice. Sharing your decision with friends or colleagues may help you carry it out.

9. If you have trouble putting the decision into practice, go back to the first suggestion to see if you're still operating under an old decision. Remember that what you actually do is the best clue to the decision you've made, not what you'd like or wish to do.

10. Remember that it's not enough to make your decision only once. You must reaffirm your decision repeatedly. For example, if you decide to lose weight, each time you sit down to eat you must reaffirm your decision.

11. If you fail occasionally in carrying out your decision, that doesn't mean that you have to give up altogether. Since most of us are not infallible, we must be able to accept an occasional failure, pick ourselves up, and continue with our decision.

Adapted from Harold Greenwald, *Direct Decision Therapy* (San Diego, CA.: Edits, 1973.)

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF DECISION BLOCKERS:

1. losing touch with feelings
2. resignation; avoidance of anxiety from potential conflict
3. having no priorities
4. lack of confidence or poor self-esteem
5. hopelessness/depression
6. unrealistic image of self
7. inappropriate dependency on others
8. perfectionism
9. belief that something better will come along, dreaming and wishful thinking
10. inability to see options
11. fear of making bad choices
12. lack of inner integration, the "chairman is missing syndrome"

Overcoming Indecisiveness, Theodore Issac Rubin, M. D.

# PROBLEM SOLVING STEPS

## STEP ONE - Defining and Isolating the Problem

A. - What is the problem as I see it?

B. - When does it tend to occur?

C. - Who is responsible for the problem?

D. - What are my problem solving goals (what do I think needs to be done)?

## STEP TWO - Positive Pay-off for Solving the Problem

A. - What will I gain by solving the problem?

B. - How will the solution affect others?

## STEP THREE - Negative Pay-off for Not Solving It.

A. - What bad feelings do I get to keep?

B. - Who can I blame or get angry at for not solving it?

C. - What do I tell myself to keep from solving the problem?

## STEP FOUR - Solutions or Alternatives

A. - List/discuss all possible solutions or alternatives.

B. - List/discuss the pros and cons to each possible option.

C. - List/state how I personally feel about each option.

D. - Make a plan on how to go about using the best solution to solve the problem.

# STAGES IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

## Identify Decision Occasions and Alternatives

a) define the decision to be made

b) identify the goals of the decision maker

c) identify available alternatives

## Examine and Evaluate Decision Alternatives

a) examine the probable outcomes of each alternative

b) evaluate and rank the alternatives

## Decide and Reflect on the Decision

a) select an alternative

b) implement the plan of action

c) assess the results of the action

d) consider recycling the process

Developing Decision Making Skills, National Council for the Social Studies, Dana K. Kurfman, Editor.

# Module IV.
# Training Outline
# Suggested Script
# Stress Management Skills

## TRAINING OUTLINE

I. INSTRUCTION

  a. Introduce topic.

  b. Elicit comments, questions, and discussion.

II. MODELING

  a. Facilitator and volunteer demonstrate appropriate behavior/skills.

  b. Show film or video that demonstrates appropriate behavior/skills.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(S)

  a. Use self-assessment as a group activity.

  (Only when participants are ready and comfortable sharing personal information.)

  b. Homework activity.

IV. EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY(S)

a. Group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, help, trusting, and support.

b. Role playing and rehearsal of behaviors and skills.

c. Homework activities.

V. FEEDBACK AND REINFORCEMENT

a. Facilitate group discussion.

b. Review.

c. Positive feedback from facilitator.

The following script is a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal:

We are not born with the skills that are necessary for us to get along with other people and to manage the survival demands of our environment. How we choose to develop and manage relationships, and how we handle environmental demands is the result of our experiences and our role models (parents, teachers, peers). Experience involves the interacting with or manipulating an object, person, place, or information of any kind.

When we encounter new and unfamiliar situations we use our past experiences to organize, order, and make sense of what is happening now. We use this process no matter what the skill to be learned. We may feel awkward and unsure of ourselves in our first attempts at performing a new skill, but as we practice we gradually forget about how we are performing, and the skill becomes natural and automatic.

Accepting and appreciating yourself are related to being aware of your strengths and assets. We all have many strengths--strengths that we are not using fully. We can develop new strengths (any skill, ability, talent, or personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your self-acceptance as you become more aware of your strengths and develop new ones. The more you see yourself as having real skills, abilities, talents, and other personal strengths, the more you will value and accept yourself.

The information that we explore and discuss and the activities that we perform throughout the training are to help you improve skills as well as learn new skills that will enable you to better manage relationships and environmental demands. Learning new skills will involve the followng steps:

1. We will discuss the importance of learning certain skills and how they will be of value to you.

2. We will examine what the skill is and how it is performed.

3. We will find ways to practice the skill.

4. We will practice the skill in groups, or you may choose to set up practice situations with people outside the group so that you can receive help and feedback about your performance.

## MANAGING STRESS

Stress is the response of the body to any change, demand, pressure, or threat. The stress response is the body's way of maintaining balance and protecting itself from external forces. When people are under too much stress or when they ineffectively manage daily stressors, a variety of symptoms may occur. The effects of stress may be physical, emotional, mental, behavioral, or reflected in the person's work.

All the external pressures, demands, threats, changes, conflicts, challenges, and difficulties we face can trigger our body's stress response. Anything that happens in our world that demands some change, adjustment, or response from us is termed a "stressor."

Managing stress involves exploration of the ways that we talk to ourselves, what we believe about situations, and our view of stressful situations.

### EFFECTS OF STRESS:

Physical effects: Elevated blood pressure and heart rate; shallow, difficult breathing; numbness, tingling, and coldness in the extremeties; queasy stomach; tight muscles; back and head pain; dry mouth and sweating.

Emotional effects: Anxiety, anger, boredom, depression, fatigue, frustration, irritability, moodiness, tension, nervousness, self-hate, worry.

Mental effects: Difficulty concentrating, poor task performance, defensiveness, focus on details, sleepiness, mental blocks.

Behavioral effects: Drug use, alcoholism, smoking, overeating, loss of appetite, impulsive or aggressive outbursts, accident proneness, restlessness, blaming others, withdrawal and isolation.

Job related effects: Job burnout, absenteeism, poor performance, job dissatisfaction, accidents, poor working relationships.

Some of the most familiar stressors include:
--any life change or important life event
--threats to our person or self-esteem
--loss of someone or something we care for or depend on
--conflicting or confusing demands or expectations
--pressure of deadlines, too much work, and confusing priorities
--conflict or difficulty with people
--frustration or threats to our personal needs

Negative thought patterns that induce stressful responses:

--excessively critical of your performance

--making excessive demands of yourself

--thinking that what you do is never good enough

--when you are successful, thinking that you don't deserve it

--when faced with a difficult task or problem, thinking of all the things that can go wrong

--feeling helpless and believing that you have no control over situations

--thinking that you can't solve problems

--expecting the worst

--letting upsetting thoughts distract you from your work

Coping Strategies:

In a stressful situation ask yourself the following questions to help you prepare for the event:

--What can I do right now to respond to the situation?

--Can I do anything to change it?

--What can I do to change my body's response?

When it is not possible to change or to leave a stressful situation, ask the following questions:

--What can I do to accept this situation?

--How can I change my attitude about it?

--Can I somehow redefine the situation so that it takes on a different meaning to me?

Changing the response to the situation is sometimes the only approach we can take. Ask the following questions:

--Since I can't change the situation, what value is there in getting excited or tense?

--Is this the best way to treat myself right now?

--What are the costs I am going to pay for allowing myself to get so stressed?

Active Coping Strategies:

--Share the problem or situation with someone.

--Talk to others about it and share feelings.

--Seek information from others.

--Try to find someone who knows how to handle the problem.

--Seek advice and support from friends.

--Talk problem over with a counselor or doctor.

--Decide it is not worth worrying about.

--Do relaxation exercises.

--Think it through and change your viewpoint or way of looking at the situation.

--Begin a regular exercise program.

--Eat a balanced and proper diet.

Ideas for Generating Support:

- --Ask for help and be receptive when it is offered.
- --Rid yourself of relationships that are not supportive or are damaging to you.
- --Maintain high-quality relationships by telling others how much you value their support.
- --Review your present relationships, make an honest assessment of how well they are working for you, and identify areas where you could use some changes.

ACTIVITY: SELF-ASSESSMENT

PROCEDURE: A. Have participants complete the self-assessment exercises to determine stressful responses.

B. Use the assessment information to develop individual plans for reducing stress.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE I.

Choose the alternative that best summarizes how you generally behave, and place your answer in the space provided.

______ 1. When I face a difficult task, I try my best and will usually succeed.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 2. I am at ease when around members of the opposite sex.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 3. I feel that I have a lot going for me.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 4. I have a very high degree of confidence in my own abilities.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 5. I prefer to be in control of my own life as opposed to having someone else make decisions for me.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 6. I am comfortable and at ease around my superiors.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 7. I am often overly self-conscious or shy when among strangers.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 8. Whenever something goes wrong, I tend to blame myself.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 9. When I don't succeed, I tend to let it depress me more than I should.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 10. I often feel that I am beyond helping.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

SCORE: __________

Scoring: 1-6; a = 1, b = 2, c = 3, d = 4
7-10: a = 4, b = 3, c = 2, d = 1

Controlling Stress and Tension: A Holistic Approach, Daniel Guidano and George Everly

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE II.

Place your answer to each of the following questions in the space provided before each number.

______ 1. I hate to wait in lines.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 2. I often find myself "racing" against the clock to save time.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 3. I become upset if I think something is taking too long.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 4. When under pressure I tend to lose my temper.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 5. My friends tell me that I tend to get irritated easily.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 6. I seldom like to do anything unless I can make it competitive.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 7. When something needs to be done, I'm the first to begin even though the details may still need to be worked out.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 8. When I make a mistake it is usually because I've rushed into something without giving it enough thought and planning.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 9. Whenever possible I will try to do two things at once, like eating while working, or planning while driving or bathing.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

______ 10. I find myself feeling guilty when I am not actively working on something.

(a) Almost always true (b) Often true
(c) Seldom true (d) Almost never true

SCORE ________

SCORING: a = 4, b = 3, c = 2, d = 1

Controlling Stress and Tension; A Holistic Approach, Daniel Geidono and George Everly

ACTIVITY: Assessing Personal Balance

Assess your energy balance:

b. Receiving-Name all of the things done to and for you by others.
c. Giving-Name all of the things you do to and for others.
d. Intrinsic-Name all of the things you do because you want to.
e. Extrinsic-Name all of the things you do because you "should," "have to," or "ought to."

PROCEDURE: Have participants examine and chart where they commit most of their time.

a. Participants who discover a major imbalance should be encouraged to develop a plan to gain more balance in their lives.

ACTIVITY: Developing a list of personal affirmations.

PROCEDURE: Have participants make a list of positive affirmations to be repeated during the day that will counteract negative personal beliefs. The affirmations should have meaning to the individual.

Make affirmations to modify negative personal beliefs:

--I am healthy and full of well-being.

--It is okay for me to get what I want.

--I deserve to be loved.

--I deserve to be happy.

--I will let myself enjoy receiving from people who care about me.

--I can accept my feelings as an important part of myself.

--I will let go of my anger.

--I will let go and relax.

--It is okay to make mistakes.

--I can ask for help when I need it.

--I will not allow my body to get involved when I feel stress.

--My body is a source of pleasure to me.

ACTIVITY: Positive Self-Talk

PROCEDURE:
- a. Have participants identify situations in which they are likely to engage in negative self-talk.
- b. Have participants develop a list of positive self-statements that will negate the negative statements that they most often use.

# COPING SELF-TALK

## PREPARING FOR OR ANTICIPATING STRESS

What is it I have to do? Focus on dealing with it.

Just take one step at a time.

Just think about what you can do about it. That's better than getting anxious.

No negative statements; just think rationally.

Don't worry; worry won't help anything.

## CONFRONTING AND HANDLING STRESS

Don't think about fear; just think about what you have to do.

Stay relevant.

Relax; you're in control. Take a slow breath. Ah, good.

You should expect some anxiety; it's a reminder not to panic and to relax and cope steadily with the situation.

Tenseness can be an ally, a friend; it's a cue to cope.

## COPING WITH THE FEELING OF BEING OVERWHELMED

When the fear comes, just pause.

Keep the focus on the present; what is it you have to do?

You should expect your fear to rise some.

Don't try to eliminate fear totally; just keep it manageable.

You can convince yourself to do it. You can reason your fear away.

It's not the worst thing that can happen.

Do something that will prevent you from thinking about fear.

Describe what is around you. That way, you won't think about worrying.

## REINFORCING SELF-STATEMENTS

It worked! You did it!

It wasn't as bad as you expected.

You made more out of the fear than it was worth.

You're getting better. You're learning to cope more smoothly.

You can be pleased with your progress.

You like how you handled it. You can be proud of it.

ACTIVITY: Changing Beliefs

PROCEDURE: a. Have participants identify a person (helper) who will agree to support them through the steps.

b. Have participants develop a personal plan and a personal affirmation for changes of negative beliefs.

## CHANGING BELIEFS

### BELIEFS

May be thought of as guides to action or tools for living--nothing more. There is no way to determine whether or not they are objectively true.

### DEFINITION

The most important question is, "Do they work for me by helping me enjoy living, respect myself and others, and interact effectively?" If not, our beliefs may be the source of unnecessary distress, irritation or difficulty in carrying out our daily tasks. But how do we change them?

### STRESSFUL EVENTS LIST

First, identify specific events which you either (1) worry about in advance or (2) ruminate about afterwards (for example, being alone, meeting deadlines, receiving criticism). Are there any general themes running throughout your list? If so, write these down also (such as intimacy, competition, performing).

### DETERMINE SELF-TALK

Second, select one such event or theme and try to make sense out of it by putting into words exactly what it is you tell yourself about that situation. For example, what it means, what may happen next, any "should" or "must" statements. Write down as many such statements as you can, using the example worksheet as a reference.

### IDENTIFY GOALS

Third, think over the list of stressful events you developed. It is quite likely that you may be experiencing distress because of realistic goals or mutually exclusive goals. Pick the goal as reflected by your behavior (not your New Year's resolution!) that corresponds to the stressful event you have selected to examine more closely. Two or more goals may be involved, and they may not be apparent at first glance. For instance, many people feel stress over trying to fulfill many roles at once (career-related, student, parent, spouse). That stress is certain to increase if one expects him/herself to be "perfect" at all times in all roles.

### BELIEFS AND ALTERNATIVES

Next, try to put into words what may be a mistaken viewpoint or belief, as reflected in your self-talk and goals. Remember, the issue is not their truth, it is their influence on behavior. Now see if you can write out an alternative statement which seems plausible and would allow you to cope more positively. Finally, describe how you might act differently with this new outlook.

### POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Fifth, go back to your list of negative self-talk and generate calm, *specific* messages with which you can help yourself cope in stressful situations. These questions may help: Do I have to perceive things that way? If I make a change in my attitude about (X), would it mean giving up an excuse which I've depended upon, or doing something that's frightening?

Finally, TAKE ACTION. It would be unrealistic, even if convenient, to expect that you will be totally self-confident before you make any behavior changes. Things need not, and probably won't, go smoothly the first time. Let yourself see clumsiness or uncertainty as natural parts of growing.

No amount of positive thinking can substitute for positive action. Often *one key action* -- for instance, making a particular phone call, taking the day off just to relax -- can symbolize the new approach you are wanting to implement. If such a key action occurs to you, DO IT! It will cement your new perspective and may lead to further action and insights.

I. *Situation*: Meeting new people

| II. Negative Self-talk | V. Positive Self-talk |
|---|---|
| 1. I won't know what to say. | 1. I can find out what they're interested in. |
| 2. We won't have anything in common. | 2. Maybe I can learn something new. |

III. Goals: Protect myself from being criticized or rejected

| IV. (1) Mistaken Belief | (2) Alternative Belief |
|---|---|
| I don't have anything to offer anyone. Most people aren't interested in getting to know me. | I am who I am. Ultimately, nothing holds me back except myself. Other people may like me as I am, or not; I can't control their reactions. |

(3) New Behavior, thoughts, and feelings if (2) replaces (1): I'd be more willing to make the first move, less concerned about appearances, more relaxed and calmer, able to appreciate others.

IV. Action Taken: That service group was advertising for volunteers. Think I'll give them a call.

*Adapted from Stress, Sanity, and Survival by Frank Richardson and Robert Woolfolk.

ACTIVITY: Planning Guide

PROCEDURE:

a. Have participant team up with a person who will be supportive and helpful to them. The helper will assist the participant in developing a detailed plan for coping with stress.

b. Modify the planning guide to meet the needs of the group.

## A GUIDE FOR PLANNING

This form is designed to lead you step by step toward formulating a creative plan for coping with your stress. The questions are designed to draw out your inner wisdom. Be sure to linger over ones that strike you as meaningful and pass quickly over others that don't seem relevant. Don't hurry. Take your time and be thoughtful.

(1) Summarize your symptoms. Symptoms That Concern Me

What is wrong?

-your pain ______________________________

-your stuck areas ______________________________

-your stress ______________________________

-your worries ______________________________

How does it feel? ______________________________

When does it hurt? ______________________________

(2) Define the problem clearly.

What is the cause of your stress? ______________________________

______________________________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Look behind the problem. Is your stress based on:

-faulty meanings you assign to events?

-your belief system?

-the pace of change in your life?

-your life stage?

-your experience with grief?

Restate your problem again in three different ways. Then look for additional solutions.

| A second way of describing my problem | Alternate solutions |
|---|---|

A third way of describing my problem

Circle the statement that for you most clearly describes the root/ cause of your stress.

(3) Identify your resources

What do you have going for you physically (energy, strength, agility, etc.)? ______________________________,

________________________________________________

What do you have going for you emotionally (self-confidence, areas of comfort, feelings, desires, etc.)? ____________

________________________________________________

What are your social supports (abilities to meet people, friendliness, friends, family, clubs, etc.)? ____________

________________________________________________

What are your intellectual resources (creativity, humor, ability to remember, concentration, insight, etc.)? ______

________________________________________________

What are your spiritual resources (faith, values, commitments, goals, etc.)? ______________________________

________________________________________________

Does your life style support you (history, regular patterns, rituals, habits, hobbies, ways of relaxing, etc.)? ________

____________________________________________

What are your most prominent stress skills? ____________

____________________________________________

Observations ________________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

(4) List what you've already tried.

| Coping Strategies Already Tried | Why They Don't Work |
|---|---|
| ________________________ | ________________ |
| ________________________ | ________________ |
| ________________________ | ________________ |
| ________________________ | ________________ |

Suggestions

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

____________________________________________

Observations ________________________________

____________________________________________

Ideas for future attempts ______________________________,

______________________________________________________,

______________________________________________________.

(5) Check your attitude.

On a scale of one to ten, your attitude regarding this problem is:

1 ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ 10
terrible, hopeless          so-so          more positive
                        wait and see          hopeful

Comments on your attitude ________________________________

______________________________________________________

(6) Define your goals clearly.

Your complaint about present problems with stress is ______

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

The need (desire) you're expressing underneath your complaint is:

I want ______________________________ but I don't have it.

To be very specific: I want ______________________________

I want ______________________________________________

I want ______________________________________________

Check these goals:

-If you get them, what would you have to give up?__________

________________________________________________________

-Are you willing to give up these things in order to reach your goals? _____________________________________________

________________________________________________________

-Are your "wants" in line with your core beliefs?__________

________________________________________________________

-Are there parts of your problem you don't want to change right now? _____________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Summary:

-What movements do you want to make happen with your problems?

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

(7) Formulate a specific plan of action.

Given the fact that you're presently trapped by your problem, what would it mean for you to take care of yourself?

________________________________________________________

Based on the changes you want to make, what specifically can you do?

I could ________________________________________________.

I could ________________________________________________.

I could ____________________________________________.

I could ____________________________________________.

I could ____________________________________________.

Rate each of these possible action plans on the basis of:

(a) ______ Does it avoid radical change?

(b) ______ Does it have long term value?

(c) ______ Can it become a positive addiction?

(d) ______ Is it a specific action plan?

With these ideas in mind, what will you plan to do? Be very specific!

(a) I will ________________________________________ and

(b) I will ________________________________________ and

(c) I will ________________________________________.

(8) Spice your plan with creativity.

To make it more energizing, you can add a zany flavor to your plan.

Instead of just (a) ________________________
your plan from above
I could ________________________
or ________________________
or ________________________
or ________________________

Instead of just (b) ________________________

I could ________________________
or ________________________

make it funny
make it bigger
make it smaller
combine it with something
do it with friends
do it alone
do it with strangers
change the time of day
do it backwards
change its color
change its shape

or ______________________________

or ______________________________

Instead of just (c) ________________________

I could ______________________________
or ______________________________
or ______________________________
or ______________________________

do it in a new place
travel
do it for free
make it crazy
simplify it
complicate it
charge it
sell it
buy it
laugh at it
learn from it
talk to it

(9) Act: do it.
Complete a summary of your plan and carry it with you so that you know what you're trying to accomplish. If you can't fill out this Rx form, your plan is not yet clearly enough defined.

Prescription: MY CHALLENGE TO MYSELF

I, ______________________________________, would like to __________
(name)

_______________________________________________ and I will attempt

to accomplish this in my life by doing the following: __________
(actions)

______________________________, ______________________________,

______________________________, ______________________________,

which will be done by ______________________________________.
(frequency and date to be accomplished)

Signed: ________________________________________

(10) Evaluate the results and revise your plan.

How fully did you complete your plan? ____________________

______________________________________________________________

What results had you hoped for? ____________________________

What went well?

What went poorly?

Summarize the results of your actions.

Evaluate your plan.

What do you still want?

Go back to step #1 and use this leftover "want" as a focus for another trip through the planning process. Keep going through the process making mid-course corrections and revising your plan until you get what you want.

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

## STROEBEL'S QUICKIE QUIETING RESPONSE

The cue(s) for you to utilize the Q.R. is if any of the following are going on with you:

1. tension
2. annoyance of any kind
3. feeling irritated
4. feeling anxious
5. feeling worried
6. feeling angry

## STROEBEL'S QUICKIE Q.R.

1. sparkle the left eye
2. sparkle the right eye
3. sparkle smile
4. say to yourself: "My body is calm and my mind is alert and amused."
5. take in a slow, easy, deep breath

This exercise permits you to counter the emergency response system (fight or flight response). Frequent practice can cause a person to be able to call up a relaxation response even under the most trying conditions. After 3-6 months of practice you may reach automaticity, which is the point at which you no longer have to consciously do the exercises because your body does them automatically. This exercise takes about 6 seconds to do, and it is recommended that you do it 50-100 times per day; however, it has been shown to be effective if done 10-30 times per day.

Biofeedback Society of America, Chuck Stroebel Training Workshop.

## JACOBENSEN RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

### RELAXATION OF HIPS, THIGHS AND CALVES FOLLOWED BY COMPLETE BODY RELAXATION

Let go of all tensions and relax...Now flex your buttocks and thighs. Flex your thighs by pressing down your heels as hard as you can... Relax and note the difference...Straighten your knees and flex your thigh muscles again. Hold the tension...Relax your hips and thighs. Allow the relaxation to proceed on its own...Press your feet and toes downwards, away from your face, so that your calf muscles become tense. Study that tension...Relax your feet and calves...This time, bend your feet towards your face so that you feel tension along your shins. Bring your toes right up...Relax again. Keep relaxing for awhile... Now let yourself relax further all over. Relax your feet, ankles, calves and shins, knees, thighs, buttocks, and hips. Feel the heaviness of your lower body as you relax still further...Now spread the relaxation to your stomach, waist, lower back. Let go more and more. Feel that relaxation all over. Let it proceed to your upper back, chest, shoulders and arms and right to the tips of your fingers. Keep relaxing more and more deeply. Make sure that no tension has crept into your throat; relax your neck and your jaws and all your facial muscles. Keep relaxing your whole body like that for awhile. Let yourself relax.

Now you can become twice as relaxed as you are merely by taking a really deep breath and slowly exhaling. With your eyes closed so that you become less aware of objects and movements around you and thus prevent any surface tensions from developing, breathe in deeply and feel yourself becoming heavier. Take in a long, deep breath and let it out very slowly...Feel how heavy and relaxed you have become.

In a state of perfect relaxation you should feel unwilling to move a single muscle in your body. Think about the effort that would be required to raise your right arm. As you think about raising your right arm, see if you can notice any tensions that might have crept into your shoulder and your arm...Now you decide not to lift the arm but to continue relaxing. Observe the relief and the disappearance of the tension....

Just carry on relaxing like that. When you wish to get up, count backwards from four to one. You should feel fine and refreshed, wide awake and calm.

# SOME BRIEF RELAXATION EXERCISES

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General Directions: For all of these exercises, it is best to be seated, eyes closed, feet flat on the floor or crossed at the ankles and hand resting comfortable in the lap. Begin each exercise with a deep breath that you let out gently. As you let it out, feel yourself beginning to relax already. Gentle Arousal: After the exercise, slowly and gently activate by breathing a little more deeply, wiggling your fingers and toes, and opening your eyes at your own rate.

Exercise I. Tense-Relax. (Give general directions.) Clench your fists. While keeping them clenched, pull your forearms tightly up against your upper arms. While keeping those muscles tense, tense all the muscles in your legs. While keeping all those tense, clench your jaws and shut your eyes fairly tight--not too tightly. Now, while holding all those tense, take a deep breath and hold it for 5 seconds . . . . . Then, let everything go all at once. Feel yourself letting go of all your tensions. Just enjoy that feeling for a minute, as your muscles let go more and more.

Actually, if we had a finely-tuned electromyograph hooked up to you measuring the level of tension in your muscles, it would show that you relax more and more and more for up to 20 minutes. Just enjoy focusing, gently, on the letting go. (Arouse gently.)

Exercise II: Heaviness and Warmth. (Give general directions first.) Just imagine that your feet and legs are getting heavier and heavier and warmer and warmer. It's almost as if you are wearing some lead boots. Feet and legs, heavy and warm, heavy and warm. Now, imagine your stomach and the whole central protion of your body getting warm...warm and relaxed. My forehead is cool...cool...relaxed and cool. And my breathing is regular...easy and regular. Just feel the warmth and heaviness spread all over the body. (Arouse gently.)

Exercise III: Breathing Your Body Away. (General directions first.) Gently focus your attention on your feet and legs. Be aware of all the sensations from your feet and legs. Now, inhale a long, slow breath, and as you do, breathe in all the sensations from your feet and legs. In your minds eye, imagine that you are erasing this part of your body. Now, as you exhale, breathe out all those sensations. Once again, breathe in your feet and legs, and exhale it from your body , so that, in your mind, you can see only from your hips up. Now, with another long breath, breathe in all the parts of your body to you neck, and as you exhale, breathe it away.... Now, beginning with your fingers, breathe in your fingers, hands, wrists and arms, and exhale them away.... Now, your neck and head...as you breathe in, imagine your neck and head being erased and, now breathe them away. Let's go back over the whole body in one breath, beginning with the feet. A long slow breath in, and as you do, erase any little parts that still remain. Now, a long, slow breath out, as you exhale all the remaining parts. Now, just sit quietly for a minute and enjoy feeling yourself relax deeper and deeper. (Gently arouse.)

Exercise IV: A Favorite Scene, Place or Person. (General directions first.) As you're sitting quietly, recall, in your mind, the most relaxing thought you can. Perhaps it's a favorite place (a vacation spot or favorite retreat of some sort; or whatever works for you). Take a few seconds to get that in mind... Now, see or imagine that you are in that place. Just let them take over your whole awareness.... If your thoughts wander, just take them gently back to that peaceful, relaxing place. (Arouse gently.)

Exercise V: Ideal Relaxation. (General directions first.) With your eyes closed, take a moment to create, in mind's eye, an ideal spot for relaxation. You can make it any place real or imagined and furnish it any way you want. Wear the clothes you are most comfortable in. Enjoy, now, in your own mind, going there. You'll want to feel at ease and mellow as you lounge in your ideal place for relaxation. Just enjoy it for a minute.... (Gentle arousal.)

Exercise VI: Cool Air In, Warm Air Out. (General directions.) With your eyes closed, and while relaxing quietly, gently focus on the end of your nose. As you breathe in, feel the air coming in the tip of your nose. As you breathe out, feel the air going out... Gently focus on the cool air coming in, and the warm air going out. As your attention wanders, just gently bring it back to the tip of your nose. . . . (Gentle arousal.)

Exercise VII: Focus on a Word. (General directions.) Pick some word which has "good" vibrations associated with it for you--a word which you associate with relaxation, comfort, peace. It could be a word such as "serenity," or "cool, peaceful, joy, free," etc. . . Now, just let that word hold the center of your thoughts. As your mind wanders to more stressful thoughts, gently bring it back to that word. . . . After awhile, perhaps your mind will drift to other gentling, restful thoughts. If so, just let it wander..... When it does drift to stressful thoughts, go back to your original word. (Gentle arousal.)

Exercise VIII: Something for Use Anywhere. (General directions.) With practice, you will become more adept at relaxing while awake, anywhere. As you do, here's a way to let yourself relax while going about your day. You can do it while walking, sitting in class, taking a test, on a date, etc. First, smile. Yes, smile, to remind yourself that you don't actually have all the cares of the world on your shoulders--only a few of them. Then, take a long deep breath, and let it out. Now, take a second long deep breath and as you let it out, feel yourself releasing the tensions in your mind and in your body. Just let yourself relax more and more, as you continue whatever you were doing. (Gentle arousal.)

# *Module V.*

# *Training Outline*
# *Suggested Script*
# *Communication Skills*

The following is a suggested outline for structuring each training session; however, the facilitator is encouraged to be creative, flexible and open to suggestions from the participants.

## TRAINING OUTLINE

I. INSTRUCTION

- a. Introduce topic.
- b. Elicit comments, questions, and discussion.

II. MODELING

- a. Facilitator and volunteer demonstrate appropriate behavior/skills.
- b. Show film or video that demonstrates appropriate behavior/skills.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(S)

- a. Use self-assessment as a group activity.

  (Only when participants are ready and comfortable sharing personal information.)

- b. Homework activity.

## IV. EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY(S)

a. Group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, help, trusting, and support.

b. Role playing and rehearsal of behaviors and skills.

c. Homework activities.

## V. FEEDBACK AND REINFORCEMENT

a. Facilitate group discussion.

b. Review.

c. Positive feedback from facilitator.

The following script is a guideline for introducing activities and skill rehearsal:

We are not born with the skills that are necessary for us to get along with other people and to manage the survival demands of our environment. How we choose to develop and manage relationships, and how we handle environmental demands is the result of our experiences and our role models (parents, teachers, peers). Experience involves the interacting with or manipulating an object, person, place, or information of any kind.

When we encounter new and unfamiliar situations we use our past experiences to organize, order, and make sense of what is happening now. We use this process no matter what the skill to be learned. We may feel awkward and unsure of ourselves in our first attempts at performing a new skill, but as we practice we gradually forget about how we are performing, and the skill becomes natural and automatic.

Accepting and appreciating yourself are related to being aware of your strengths and assets. We all have many strengths--strengths that we are not using fully. We can develop new strengths (any skill, ability, talent, or personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your

personal quality that helps you be effective and productive). You increase your self-acceptance as you become more aware of your strengths and develop new ones. The more you see yourself as having real skills, abilities, talents, and other personal strengths, the more you will value and accept yourself.

The information that we explore and discuss and the activities that we perform throughout the training are to help you improve skills as well as learn new skills that will enable you to better manage relationships and environmental demands. Learning new skills will involve the followng steps:

1. We will discuss the importance of learning certain skills and how they will be of value to you.

2. We will examine what the skill is and how it is performed.

3. We will find ways to practice the skill.

4. We will practice the skill in groups, or you may choose to set up practice situations with people outside the group so that you can receive help and feedback about your performance.

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication involves a series of activities and responses that include facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, voice quality, physical appearance, body posture, body movement, speaking and listening. Communication deals with information and messages that you consciously or unconciously reveal about yourself. One cannot not communicate. When we make an effort to remain neutral, to present an impression, to disguise how we feel, we communicate a message. When we feel one emotion but verbalize another we are sending a complex mixed message. Communication can be silent or vocal; direct or indirect; formal or informal; or simple or complex. Communication is an ongoing continuous process involving two people who are sending and receiving, acting and reacting, interpreting messages and responding to each other.

Communication is necessary for our psychological and physical well being. There are four major ways that we use our communication skills:

1. To make contact with others
   --greet people
   --exchange social conversation

--report on people and events

--establish personal relationships

--maintain personal relationships

2. To exhance information:

--explain an idea

--clarify a difficult point

--illustrate with examples

--ask and answer questions

--extend ideas by relating to others

3. To influence others:

--stimulate feelings

--present new viewpoin[illegible]

--convince through basic appeals

--encourage open communication

--counsel or give advice

--share a conviction

4. To solve problems:

--identify problems

--specify causes

--consider alternatives

--propose and select solutions

The lifestyle that we adopt communicates messages about us. Personal possessions, style of dressing, social activities, personal relationships, physical appearance, and occupations are all components of communication that influence how other people respond to us. We are evaluated, categorized, and labeled by others based upon their perceptions of the information we reveal about ourselves.

In order to develop effective communication skills, it is important to understand the factors that affect communication. Some of these factors are: How you see yourself, how others see you, your feelings, how you think and how you behave when interacting with others.

Effective communication occurs when the receiver of the message interprets (understands) the sender's message the way the sender intended it. Many communication failures are created by emotional and social barriers while others are related to vocabulary differences, grammatical form, and lack of or poor verbal ability.

Communication involves a sender of a message and a receiver of a message that is transmitted by any nonverbal or verbal symbol. Communication involves the eyes, ears, nose, and skin. We use our senses to process information that is communicated to us. The channel is the means of conveying the message to a receiver. Through nonverbal message channels we gather information about other people. These channels include the following:

Physical characteristics: height; weight; age; sex; body structure; skin color and texture; color, length, and style of hair.

Body movements or stillness: posture in sitting, standing, or reclining; movement of the torso, arms, legs, head, hands, shoulders; and more subtle movements of the face and eyes.

Personal appearance: choices of clothing, shoes, glasses, jewelry, etc.

Personal preferences about spending time: work, sleep, vacations, social activities, community activities.

Nonverbal communication accompanies verbal communication, and it can strengthen, change, or substitute for the spoken word. Handshakes, nods of the head, and touching can strengthen a friendly verbal message. The nonverbal message changes the verbal message when it does not match the spoken word. Nods, smiles, shrugs, pointing and waving can substitute for the spoken word.

The first thing that other people notice about you is your personal appearance. Your individual style is reflected in your clothes, hairstyle and grooming. You will be accepted more readily by people who prefer styles that are similar to your choices, and the more your appearnce differs from others, the less likely you are to be accepted. Nothing is more basic than personal grooming. Hygiene, cleanliness and care of personal belongings is essential in developing relationships and overcoming rejection and alienation. Daily baths using soap and deodorant; clean teeth; clean and neatly groomed hair; clean shaven face; clean trimmed nails; and fresh, neat, and pressed clean clothes are standard requirements for a favorable impression.

An individual's personal appearance sends powerful and lasting messages to other people. Cleanliness and neatness convey the message that you care about your body and your image. A dirty, unkept appearance conveys the message that you do not care about or value your body and your image. An unkept appearance may indicate depression, lack of knowledge and awareness of personal hygiene, or general low self-esteem.

Body movement is a nonverbal communicator that includes a person's walk, body position in relation to another person, gestures, touching, and facial expressions. Eye contact is one of the most informative and powerful forms of nonverbal communication. Initial eye contact signals a readiness to communicate. Both positive and negative messages are transmitted by eye contact. The evasion of eye contact is viewed in our society as deceit, dishonesty, shyness, or as emotional and social withdrawal. Making eye contact with another person suggests that you are open and receptive to the other person. Eye contact signals that you acknowledge their presence.

Gestures are symbolic of our feelings and thoughts and serve as substitutes for verbal statements. When a person taps his temple with the tip of his forefinger, he is signaling that a person is crazy or stupid or that the person is very bright and intelligent. We can accurately interpret his meaning by using other nonverbal clues such as facial expressions that accompany the gesture.

Communication experts have determined that at least six universal facial expressions exist. Happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, anger, and disgust are expressions that are always recognized. We rely on facial expressions to convey our feelings and attitudes.

In the communication process everyone brings the same elements:

> He brings his body--which moves, has form and shape.
> He brings his values--those concepts that represent his way of trying to survive and live the "good life."
> He brings his expectations of the moment, gleaned from his past experience.
> He brings his sense organs--eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin which enable him to see, hear, smell, taste, touch, and be touched.
> He brings his ability to talk--his words and voice.
> He brings his brain--which is the storehouse of his knowledge, including what he has learned from his past experience--what he has read and what he has been taught.
>
> PEOPLE MAKING, Virginia Satir, Science and
> Behavior Books, Inc., Palo Alto, California.

All Communication is learned. We learn effective as well as ineffective methods of communication. Communication is not a separate function that we can turn on and off at will. Every moment that we are alive, we are communicating something about ourselves. Our presence sends a message, and our absence sends a message to people in our social and work environments. We cannot not communicate.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR:

1. Clearly "own" your messages by using first person singular pronouns: "I," "My." Personal ownership includes clearly taking responsiblility for the ideas and feelings that are expressed.

2. Make your message complete and specific. Include clear statements of all necessary information the receiver needs in order to comprehend the message.

3. Make your verbal and nonverbal message congruent. If a person is expressing gratitude, he is smiling and expressing warmth that reinforces the verbal statement. If the person says how much he appreciated your help but fails to look at you and his voice does not express warmth, then the nonverbal communication is incongruent with the verbal message.

4. Be redundant. Repeating your messages more than once and using more than one channel of communication (visual aid) helps the receiver to understand the message.

5. Ask for feedback. Question the receiver about his understanding of the message.

6. Make the message appropriate to the receiver's frame of reference. Messages and information are presented differently to a child than to an adult.

7. Describe your feelings by name, action or figure of speech: "I feel sad," "I feel like crying," "I feel blue."

8. Describe other people's behavior without evaluating or interpreting. "You keep interrupting me," rather than "You are a rude, self-centered jerk who never listens to anyone else's ideas."

## EMPLOYEE VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Communicate orally in a manner that is not distracting to the listener.
2. Use slang only when appropriate.
3. Communicate thoughts, actions, feelings, ideas, observations and questions effectively.
4. Initiate, maintain and conclude a social conversation.
5. Use appropriate body language: eye contact, facial expresssions, body posture, and gestures.
6. Use appropriate cadence, inflection and tone of voice.
7. Give directions and information in a concise and clear manner.

   --describe, in a few short sentences, information about a given person, place, thing, or job performed.
   --describe an experience or some event that was witnessed.
   --organize and express directions in a logical sequence.
   --explain to someone else how to perform a task.
8. Obtain and give telephone information.
9. Ask for explanations.
10. Repeat information back for clarification.
11. Describe how something works.
12. Order supplies and materials.
13. Repeat a customer order and telephone message.
14. Express an idea to improve a process.
15. Give instructions.
16. Describe an item, product or service.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES:

1. Have each participant bring an item of their choice to the session and make a 2 to 4 minute presentation that includes: a physical description of the object, what it's function is, how it is constructed, and how it is operated.

2. Have participants initiate, maintain, and conclude a brief social conversation.

3. Have participants obtain information about a product or service by telephone.

4. Have participants initiate a phone call to inform someone about an event or activity. This can be an imagined role playing exercise.

5. Have group members ask presenters for additional information or explanations.

6. Have participants choose an activity or an object and instruct others in how to perform the activity or how to use the object.

7. Have participants role play taking telephone messages.

8. Have participants give directions to a location in an organized logical sequence to another person. Have them role play giving the same directions by phone.

9. Have participants describe and inform the group in a concise and clear manner: a person, place, thing, or job performed. Describe an experience or some event that was witnessed.

## EMPLOYEE LISTENING SKILLS

1. Obtain specific information.
2. Identify procedures and directions to follow and/or to achieve some specific end or result.
3. Identify the main idea from a given speech that has one main idea.
4. Understand general concepts.
5. Understand sequential and temporal relationships, including cause and effect relationships.
6. Use context clues to infer the meaning of unknown words.
7. Draw conclusions from the facts given.
8. Predict future events based on the facts given.
9. Identify what additional information is needed after hearing a conversation.
10. Understand directions and instructions.

## RECOGNIZING NON-VERBAL CUES

Time. Example: A person who keeps another waiting more than 10 minutes for a meeting or makes a meeting shorter than appropriate, communicates a negative attitude.

Furniture Arrangement. Furniture should be arranged to enhance communication rather than create a barrier between the sender and receiver.

Attractiveness. Psychologists have found that the attractiveness or ugliness of surroundings creates feelings that carry over to the communication situation and the people involved.

Proximity. Putting a physical distance between yourself and another person creats a communication barrier. Taking a position close to the other person conveys a warm positive attitude. Note, however, that in American culture, closer than 18 inches is considered intimate. An accepted personal distance is 18 inches to four feet.

Posture.

A person's posture can convey any number of messages: energy-fatigue, interest-boredom, approval--disgust, anxiety--confidence, like--dislike, approachability--unapproachability, and so on. Closed posture, such as crossing arms and legs and leaning away from a person, generally convey dislike. Open positions and leaning forward indicate interest and liking.

Gestures. Frequent gestures are generally positve, as are relaxed, open-palm types of gestures. Infrequent gestures send negative signals, as do clenched-fist or other threatening gestures. Although American culture does not advocate touching other people, such gestures can effectively convey impressions of warmth, maturity, sensitivity and seriousness.

Facial expressions. Head and facial movements are probably the clearest indicators of interpersonal attitudes. Nodding the head is positive. Shaking it is negative. Lowering the head, peering over glasses or cocking the head to one side usually indicates skepticism or suspicion. Eyes are the key non-verbal indicator. Eye contact indicates a desire for communication or feedback and friendliness. Lack of eye contact may indicate either dislike or lack of interest. Americans are careful about how and when they meet each other's eyes. In our normal conversation, each eye contact lasts only about a second before one or both individuals look away. When two Americans look searchingly into each other's eyes, emotions heighten and the relationship grows more intense.

Therefore, we scrupulously avoid this, except in appropriate circumstances.

Americans abroad sometimes find eye behavior and other body language difficult to interpret.

---Hands and Feet. Next to our eyes, our hands, feet and legs most clearly reveal our feelings.

Shrewd managers deliberately look at people's hands and feet to clarify unclear messages. For the real message, watch the feet and hands. Individuals may successfully control their faces and appear calm and self-controlled--unaware that a foot betrays tension and anxiety, beating the floor constantly, restlessly, as if in a life of its own. Frequent shifting of leg positions may reveal restlessness.

---Silence. Timing of a pause or a prolonged silence can speak volumes. We have all seen occasions when a person overwhelmed with joy or grief couldn't verbalize feelings. Yet, powerful emotions came through. Silence can also demonstrate interest and show a genuine concern; it can encourage additional talk.

---Voice Characteristics. People judge others by various voice characteristics. For example, speaking loudly, rapidly or at a high pitch can indicate anger. The importance of the voice is obvious when you consider that even such words as "I hate you" can be made to sound seductive.

---Develop Awareness of Non-Verbal Communication Slowly. We learn almost all non-verbal signaling from our home, our peers and our work environment. The better you know people or become familiar with their ethnic and geographic backgrounds and occupational groups, the more accurately you can read them. Interpreting non-verbal behavior involves knowing:

-What to look for.
-Where to look for it.
-How to observe it.

We can't observe all non-verbal actions at once. One good way to develop your awareness of non-verbal behavior is to turn on the television without any sound. Try to interpret the moods and interactions strictly based on the gestures and movements. Look at:

-Eye movement
-Facial expressions
-Gestures
-Posture
-Hand, arm, foot and leg movements

Positive non-verbal actions that help communicate include:

-Maintaining eye contact

-Occasionally nodding the head in agreement

-Smiling and showing animation

-Leaning toward the speaker

-Speaking at a moderate rate in a calm assuring tone

Non-verbal language can create negative responses and decrease the flow of information. Here are some actions to avoid:

-Looking or turning away from the speaker

-Closing your eyes

-Using an unpleasant voice tone

-Speaking too quickly or too slowly

-Yawning excessively

If you think you're sending mixed signals, ask associates or trusted friends for feedback. Take the initiative to invite feedback because it's difficult to monitor your own non-verbal message. Although you can't fake body language, you can attempt to become more aware of how you transmit messages non-verbally and how to read the signals in others more effectively.

Resource materials for effective communication:

Reaching out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-actualization. David Johnson, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Let's Talk Business. Jean H. Michulka, South-Western Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Psychology of Adjustment and Well-Being. Stanley L. Brodsky, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Nonverbal Communication: A Guide for Teachers. National Textbook Company, Skokie, Illinois.